DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 137 929 EA 009 405

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TITLE How Organization-Environment Interactions Restrict the Policy-Related Abilities of the Michigan Department of Education.
PUB DATE Apr 77
NOTE 87p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (New York, N.Y., April 4-8, 1977)

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$4.67 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Case Studies; Educational Policy; Models; *Organizational Effectiveness; *Organizational Theories; *Policy Formation; Political Influences; *State Departments of Education; Systems Approach
IDENTIFIERS *Michigan Department of Education

ABSTRACT

During 1974-75, a nine-month field study of the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) was performed. Researchers observed MDE members at work, attended meetings, conducted interviews, and read documentary material. Attention was focused on the MDE at a system level and on the top 30-40 persons whose actions both caused and reflected organizational behavior. Open Systems Theory was used as a conceptual framework, with emphasis on organization-environment interactions. The organizational strategies employed to acquire resources were observed through seven case studies of issues of major importance to the MDE, including higher education, special education, compensatory education, professional development of teachers, and federal Titles I, III, and V. The author concludes that powerful environmental elements usually weakened the MDE's ability to generate educational policy. This lack of power was not seen as a people problem; MDE members were found to be generally highly qualified and committed. The author suggests that the MDE's inability to demonstrate a "technical core" made it increasingly vulnerable to other weakening influences, especially political ones. (Author/JG)

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HOW ORGANIZATION-ENVIRONMENT INTERACTIONS RESTRICT THE POLICY-RELATED ABILITIES OF THE MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Prepared for AERA, New York City

April 8, 1977

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EA 009 405

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INTRODUCTION

According to James D. Thompson, "Uncertainty appears as the fundamental problem for complex organizations, and coping with uncertainty, as the essence of the administrative process." (Thompson, 1967, p. 159). Organizations are thus complex open systems which act at the system level. Not all acts at this level are controllable by the leaders of the organization. This occurs because organizations necessarily act to reduce uncertainty about continued input of energy, of resources, from their uncertain environments. Those environments include similar organizations, governments, competitors, society, and other sources of energy. It is argued here that the strategies used by organizations to reduce uncertainty can be accounted for by a six-cell typology. Examples of patterns in the use of these strategies by the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) are presented within eight case studies. The impact of these system-level strategies on the ability of MDE leaders to create educational policy in a "rational model" mode is examined. Thus the study can be reduced to two questions. One: "How does MDE reduce uncertainty about resource input from its environment?" Two, "What influences do these acts have on the policy-making ability of the agency?" Answers were sought by two researchers during most the 1974-75 academic year by performing an on-site field study of MDE in its Lansing offices. Generally, it is argued here that the ability of the agency to influence educational policy is restricted by the environment, by the strategies enacted on the environment, and by the resulting changes in the organization itself.

METHODOLOGY

As stated above, field methodology was used. Two researchers spent a great deal of time on-site, interacting with agency members as they worked, attending meetings, and interacting with each other and with outsiders. Over the nine months of the study, three methods were used: interviewing, observing, and reading documentary material. At the outset the study was intentionally unfocused, but the question "How does MDE reduce uncertainty about resources input?" soon emerged as a dominant theme. Eight case studies, issues of major importance to the agency, were selected for intensive study. The answer to the "reducing uncertainty" question was asked in the context of these case studies.

Selecting Cases

Of the eight cases chosen, four dealt with issues at the state level and three concerned federal involvement. The eighth was in fact not truly a case but a potpourri of observations about interagency communication. All will be described later. It is important to note here that cases were selected to reflect the variety of the agency, but that some major but very stable programmes were excluded. In terms of staff the federally funded Vocational Rehabilitation Servic Area includes nearly half of the MDE staff - but very little of the attention of the centre of the agency. Thus this nearly autonomous subunit was not observed. Alternatively, the teacher centre case involved only a comparative pittance in dollars and staff - but there was great potential for future control of schools, the environment was active and hostile, and the attention directed to the issue was great. The Teachercentre question is included here. Thus sampling can be considered purposive, reflecting a subjective assessment of representativeness and relevance to the uncertainty issue.

Specific Methods

In this study, field methodology was used. Two researchers spent a great deal of time on-site, interacting with agency members as they worked. Over the nine months of the study, three methods were used: interviewing, observing, and reading documents.

Three types of interviews were used in the study: informal, open-ended, and structured interviews. Informal interviews are those chance interactions between an on-site researcher and his subjects, the accidental encounters at lunch and random conversations which have no a priori goal - but which are often informative. Open-ended interviews have a general theme, such as "What services does your section provide for the agency or for its clients?" These did not, in this study, generally have a fixed interview schedule. Structured interviews were simply that; they were more goal-directed, a pre-determined guide was used, and interviews were usually taped for later transcription.

Five types of observations were conducted: internal meetings, interagency meetings, external meetings, "following people" and non-work interactions. Internal meetings included the Executive Council (top 8 MDE staff), the Administrative Council, (a larger group), and the State Board of Education, plus occasional task-forces and sub-committees. In interagency meetings MDE staff were observed interacting with major members of the MDE environment, including the professional interest groups, the school district leaders, and state and federal government personnel. External meetings are those meetings from which MDE was excluded, but whose membership was of interest in this study. Once, researchers did "follow people", spending a block of time observing a single person at work. Last were the non-work, chance interactions described above as informal interviews.

Five types of documentary material were available. The first category is documents produced by MDE for publication, including press releases, material

related to State Board meetings, reports, and public relations material. Second, internal MDE reports, working papers, and memoranda were typically available. Third, outsiders such as interest groups often produced documents about MDE, usually reactions to MDE programmes. Fourth, outsiders would also often produce material of common interest, such as reactions to federal programmes, or to legislation which would affect both MDE and teachers. Fifth is correspondence between MDE and outside agencies. Access was often open since letters of major importance would be formally presented to the State Board.

Sampling

First, in fall 1974,the exploratory phase was conducted. The organizational chart of MDE at the time of the study is shown in igure 1. At the outset, all members of the agency from levels one to four were interviewed. This was a 100% sample of the population of interest. Interviews were the open-ended type: "What does your unit do?" Concurrently, almost all meetings of the Executive and Administrative Councils and the State Board were being attended, and documents were being read. Also interactions with relevant outsiders were occurring and adding to the pool of data. At the end of this exploratory phase, about Christmas of 1974, the eight cases had been tentatively identified.

Second was an interval of focusing, in which theoretical and practical preparation for the case study task was carried out. The researchers kept in touch with MDE, though at a less intense level. When the strategies idea and the selection of cases were felt to be certain, intensive research resumed.

Selection of case studies themselves, as discussed above, was a purposive sampling task. That is, cases were chosen according to perceived representativeness and impact on the agency. Those cases which were believed to be rich in data relevant to the purposes of the study were identified by the researchers. This is obviously a subjective choice - but a strength of field research is that an on-site researcher is informed and can make such choices wisely. A sampling mode which is not probabalistic is not automatically a random one.

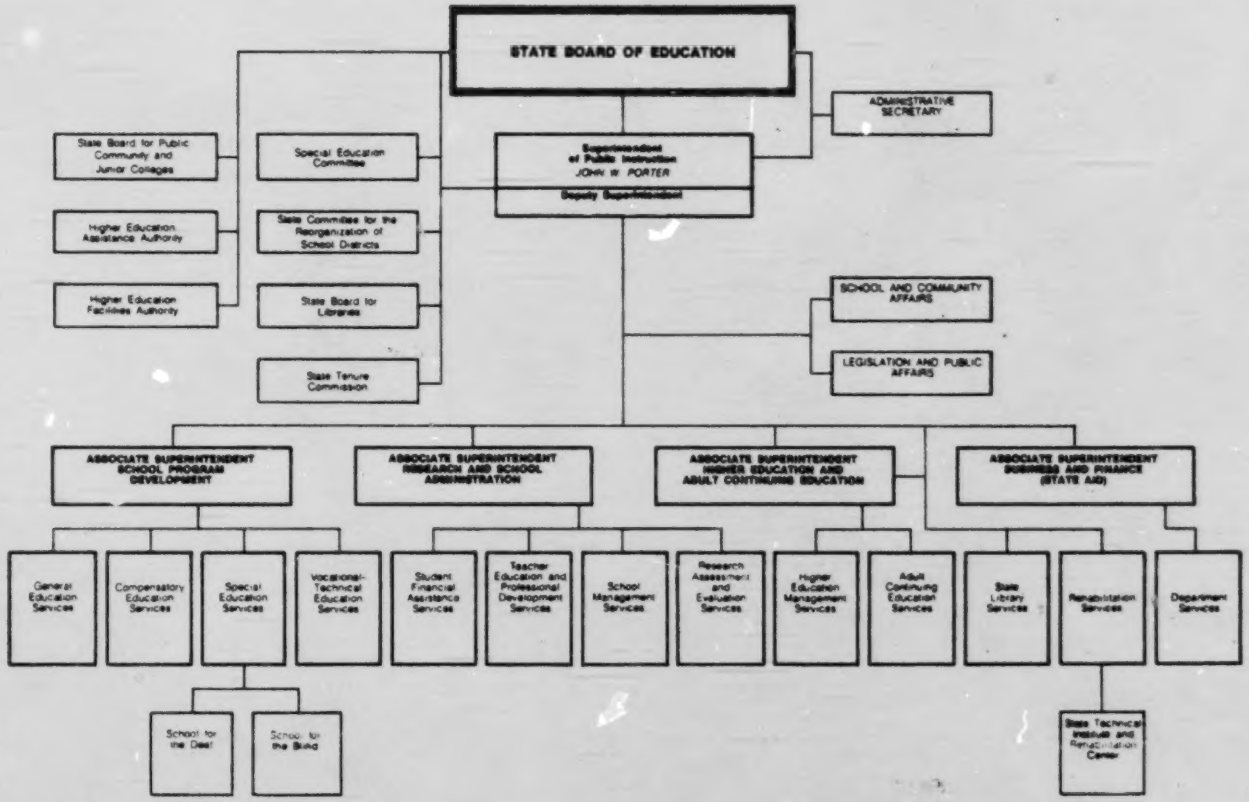
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARY
State Board for Public Community and Junior Colleges
Special Education Committee
Superintendent of Public Instruction
JOHN W. PORTER
Deputy Superintendent
Higher Education Assistance Authority
State Committee for the Reorganization of School Districts
Higher Education Facilities Authority
State Board for Libraries
State Tenure Commission
SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY AFFAIRS
LEGISLATION AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS
ASSOCIATE SUPERINTENDENT SCHOOL PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT
ASSOCIATE SUPERINTENDENT RESEARCH AND SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION
ASSOCIATE SUPERINTENDENT HIGHER EDUCATION AND ADULT CONTINUING EDUCATION
ASSOCIATE SUPERINTENDENT BUSINESS AND FINANCE (STATE AID)
General Education Services
Compensatory Education Services
Special Education Services
Vocational-Technical Education Services
Student Financial Assistance Services
Teacher Education and Professional Development Services
School Management Services
Research Assessment and Evaluation Services
Higher Education Management Services
Adult Continuing Education Services
State Library Services
Rehabilitation Services
Department Services
School for the Deaf
School for the Blind
State Technical Institute and Rehabilitation Center

Figure 1: Organizational Chart of the Michigan Department of Education

The sampling for the third phase was also purposive. As a result of the exploratory phase, persons inside and outside of MDE having information about the case studies had been identified. Thus, when a meeting including those people or that topic occurred, it was observed. Structured interviews (with extensive probing) were conducted with about 30 persons. Documentary material was concurrently acquired. In this way a large and varied body of data for each case study was acquired.

This third phase appears to have been highly focused. In fact, there were still meetings which were attended because they sounded interesting, because we had time, because someone recommended them, because it was polite to be present, . . . and so on. Often, these were unproductive. But equally often they were almost gold mines of data. One such meeting helped the crucial "Teachercentre" issue to coalesce, another led to the recognition of a whole new category of strategies. While such apparent lack of precision may be appalling to some statisticians, it is one of the most productive aspects of field studies. But this is not to suggest that randomness in method is desirable. To the contrary, it was a commitment to the repetitive, systematic sampling made in the first phase which provided the context which gave meaning to later purposive and serendipitous findings. There is more to a field study than intuition.

Sources

Care was taken to choose an appropriate diversity of sources. The most common sources of data were inside the agency itself, via interview, observation, and reading. Care was taken to access persons from the executive level of the agency, from the administrative level, and from the elected State Board, for each of the eight cases. At the state level, elected or administrative government personnel were interviewed and/or observed at meetings. The "external" meetings of agencies in the environment of MDE were usually informative. Representatives of relevant interest groups were interviewed (preferably) or observed

Data Source	Method				
	Informal Interview	Open-ended Interview	Formal Interview	Observing	Reading "by" or "about"
MDE Executive level	X	X	X	X	X
MDE Staff	X	X	X	X	X
State Board	X		X	X	X
State Government	X		X	X	X
Federal Government US Office of Education, N.I.E.		X		X	X
Interest Groups, Others	X		X	X	X

Table 1 : Methods used with various data sources across the whole study.

"in action". Interagency interaction with the federal government was observed over three days of meetings in D.C., and on other occasions in Lansing and in Washington. The sources and methods are shown in Table 1. This illustrates the breadth of sources sampled overall. Individual cases rarely received that full range of input - but conscious efforts to achieve this comprehensive level were made, and were reasonably successful in all eight cases.

During the course of the research one author, Nelson, was employed half-time by one of the major environmental elements, the Middle Cities Education Association, (MCEA). This is a consortium of thirteen of the largest urban school districts (Detroit excluded) in the State. MCEA activities included lobbying, professional development, and research. Thus interaction with members at meetings was possible and informative. Also, MCEA was involved in a small research contract with MDE and Nelson was active in that research. Last, Nelson also shared the task of preparing an evaluation report for a federally funded, MDE administered (ESEA Title III) Project in an urban school district. All three of these activities provided added perspectives from which to view MDE, and were valuable sources of initial or confirming data.

Caveat

One overall impression is important. There was no "late-night garbage-can research" in which the hidden secrets of MDE were stolen. The MDE leaders and staff were as free with access to documents as they were with their time. The agency operates in such a way that its major acts are public. This is one reason other writers have labelled Michigan educational politics as rather confusing. Democracy in Michigan (for better or worse), is raw and public to a great degree. This does not suggest that there are no informal decisions, many of those were observed. But issues are not hidden, disagreement among actors is common, and resolution is typically public - or at least observable to a knowledgeable outsider. The researchers do not believe that anything analagous to the Pentagon Papers is hidden within the bowels of MDE.

AN OPEN-SYSTEM PARADIGM OF ORGANIZATIONAL STRATEGIES

Organizations act, and emit "behaviours" at the systemic level. These may or may not be intended (or desirable) from the point of view of the leaders of the organization. Examples include goal succession (Sills, 1957), tendency toward oligarchy (Michels, 1911) and cooptation (Selznick, 1949). Here, such actions are called strategies. A strategy is an act by an organization which attempts to reduce uncertainty about incoming energy, resources. For an open system the environment is the ultimate source of resources. Thus, organizational strategies will be directed to or have impact on the environment of that organization. A typology of such strategies is needed, and can be developed from two questions.

The first is "What is the target of the strategy?" Most international wars clearly involve external targets, perhaps one nation seeks land owned by another. The first country (A, below) uses the strategy "conflict" to gain resources, in this case the land, from an element in its environment, country B. Strategies with external targets are designated proactive here.

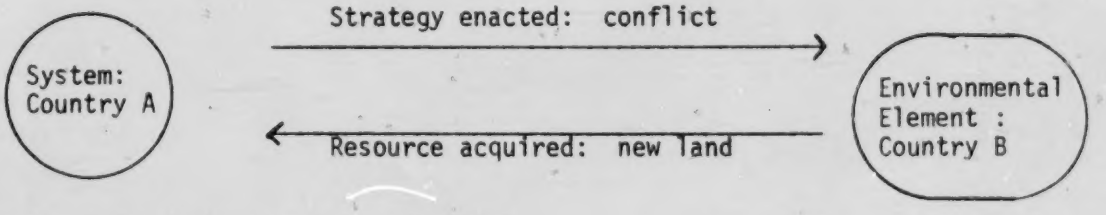

Figure 2. A Proactive Strategy, Conflict

The second target of a strategy is the system itself. The inevitable post-Ford restructuring of the Republican party is such a reactive strategy. The organization's target is itself, but the act may have influence on ability to acquire resources (contributions, votes) from its environment (supporters, registered voters).

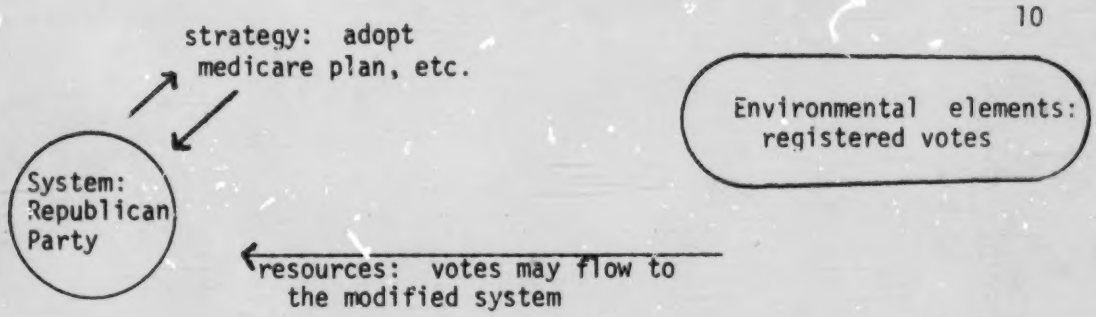

Figure 3: A Reactive Strategy

The remaining possible target is "no target at all". That is, the organizational system may not enact any strategy even in case of shortage of resources. Through design or ignorance, a passive strategy may be chosen. The National Hockey League, having completed expansion for the moment, is adopting a passive strategy toward the World Hockey Association, convinced the latter organization is no immediate threat to resources.

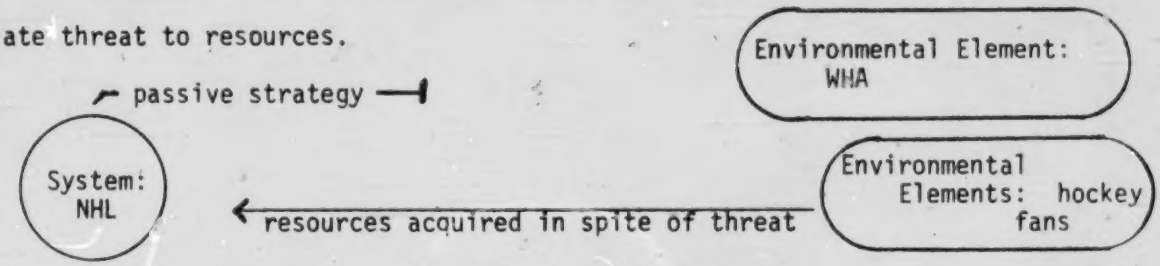

Figure 4: A Passive Strategy

Obviously there are other concurrent interactions among the three elements shown, but these need not be investigated here.

The second question is "When was the strategy enacted?" One possibility is that some threat, stress, some source of uncertainty, was recognized or predicted before it began to affect resources - and an anticipatory strategy was enacted. Research and development is a reactive way to build extra capacity in advance of stress. The multinational oil companies are buying coal reserves in advance of need; this is reactive since it strengthens their own capacity, but it is also proactive since it removed a potentially competing element from the environment.

When uncertainty is not prepared for, an organization must act post facto. The strategy may be reactive: markets declined so Xerox sold its computer division. The strategy may also be proactive, like the cooptation of environmental elements

by TVA only after a threat was recognized. (Selznick, 1949). In either case it is the after-the-fact nature of the strategy which is conceptually important.*

It is possible to combine the responses to the two questions to form a six-cell typology, as in Table 2. Examples follow.

		by Target: Passive	Reactive	Proactive
By Time	Post Facto	I. Initial Nixon reaction to Watergate burglary	III. intensification of Arctic oil exploration after 1973	V. cooptation by TVA OPEC
	Anticipatory	II. U.N. reaction to U.S. criticism	IV. invention of the Xerox process	VI. lobbying

Table 2 : Typology of Strategies by Target and Time.**

I. The public revelation that pro-Republican supporters had engineered a break-in at the 1972 Democratic headquarters created a source of uncertainty for the Nixon inner circle. The first post facto response was passive, to "ride it out", to deny everything and hope it would be forgotten soon. This is a case of non-response to an unexpected condition of uncertainty.

II. When the UN General Assembly passed the famous resolution condemning Zionism as racism, there was surely no doubt that the U.S. would take offense. But the U.S. was relatively powerless in this instance. The resolution thus constituted an anticipatory decision to be passive to the wishes of the U.S. A passive anticipatory policy decision was made to ignore or at least to absorb uncertainty from this relatively powerless element.

* It is possible to add an "at no time" category here regarding time of enactment, but it was felt that this was similar to the passive strategy, and would have contributed more diversion than conceptual power.

** This chart and the six following examples have appeared in a paper presented by the author at the Canadian Society for Studies in Education, June, 1976.

III. Environmental concerns and mediocre prices had kept Arctic explorations for gas and oil at a slow pace in the early 1970's. After the Arab embargo, the U.S. especially reacted by increasing permissive legislation and money suppy for exploration and development.

IV. The development of Xerography was reactive in that it was the company's own capacity which was enhanced; there was no acting out on the environment at that point. It was anticipatory in that the development occurred before a market was deliniated, before the environment had caused a state of uncertainty. Capacity had been created in advance of need.

V. Selznick's (1949) description of the cooptation of the TVA by the land grant universities, the Farm Bureau and even USDA belongs here. The cooptive efforts required TVA to allow itself to be seduced by its environment, to bargain away control for cooperation - the effort was clearly proactive, and was also post facto. TVA did not give up any control until it was clear they were threatened, until a condition of immanent uncertainty and stress was recognized.

The coalition called OPEC is one of the most dramatic strategies of the seventies. Twelve nations compose the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries. They had to act proactively to form OPEC, but did so only after years of selling oil at artificially low prices to more developed nations.

VI. Lobbying is a nearly pure form of anticipatory, proactive behaviour. The effective lobby is acting out, trying to influence the government, a key environmental element. Further, such action is ideally in advance of immediate need. For example, Peter C. Newman (1975) suggests that Canadian bankers have been lobbying for their favoured changes in the 1977 review of the Bank Act ever since the last review - ten years ago!

This discussion demonstrates the existence of those behaviours called "strategies" here, and further shows that the typology is a useable means of organizing those strategies.

OPERATIONALIZING THE PARADIGM

Organizations, as open systems, are necessarily concerned with reducing uncertainty about incoming resources. Thus strategies are enacted which have implications for supply of resources from the environment. In order to discuss MDE in this context, the four parts of that paradigm must be operationalized: the system, the resources, the environment, and the strategy.

The Organization: MDE Itself

MDE was defined formally as including only those persons elected or hired to membership. MDE is thus composed of three elements or subsystems, the elected State Board of Education (SBE), the Board-appointed superintendent, and the nearly 2,500 agency staff.

The eight-member State Board is elected on a partisan at-large basis, two members per State election for an eight-year term. Legally, they hold whatever authority MDE has under the catchall "leadership and general supervision over all public education" in the 1963 Constitution.

Since its creation in 1963, MDE has had three superintendents. The incumbent, Dr. John Porter, is known as a powerful and dynamic leader. His personal influence has been discussed at length by others (Hines et al, 1973) and will not receive major attention here.

MDE staff number about 2,500. In this study only one or two hundred could be even indirectly observed. Demographic, budgetary, and impressionistic data agree that staff tend to be young, highly academically qualified, well-paid, well-travelled, and diverse in training, origin, race and sex. On the other hand, staff were ideologically similar, rather zealous about the role of their agency. One official said

> Our staff does not have time to sit back and meditate or theorize . . . they can't be ideologically independent.

What is it that these homogeneous staff members do?

As shown in figure 1, the State Board is titular and legal head of the agency. Reporting is the Superintendent, who in turn supervises a deputy superintendent and four associate superintendents. These four include School Program Development, Research and School Administration, Higher and Adult Education, and Business and Finance. The thirteen service areas at the next level are the basic building blocks of the organization. These include some recurring, traditional functions (Baily et al, 1962) such as General Education (the original service-consulting roles), Special Ed., Vocational Ed., School Administration, Department Services, and Teacher Certification. Recent federal action has added or strengthened Compensatory Education, Vocational Rehabilitation, and Research and Evaluation. Three higher education areas exist in Michigan: Higher Education Management, Adult and Continuing Education, and Student Financial Assistance. Last, the State Library is a service area within MDE.

It is worth noting that this range of services implies a diverse clientele. It is unlikely that an agency with such varied responsibilities can be free of internal conflict. Also, these 13 service areas are augmented by central functions of Personnel, Legislation and Public Affairs, School and Community Relations, and a planning unit. The agency is geographically spread through ten buildings in Lansing, reflecting and aggravating the diversity in structure and in clientele. Of the ten, the Bank Tower which houses the centralized functions serves as "head office" of the agency, and is physically "across the street" from the Capitol.

Resources

MDE is a large hierarchical state bureaucracy with highly differentiated clientele and functions. Within these confines it must at least survive, at best achieve predetermined objectives. As an open system, it will need energic input in either case. The following listing of usable resources incorporates the ideas of several authors already referenced. (Table 3).

Money: In the case of MDE, money comes from both federal and state resources. Most is "flow-through", that is money which MDE disburses to school districts, students, to contractors. To go beyond survival needs, MDE needs discretionary money, not flow-through.

Labour: As described above, the "labour" input at MDE is primarily professional and highly specialized. MDE seems to acquire or inspire significant committment to its goals in its personnel.

Raw Materials: Beyond paper and ink, this resource has little meaning in a state bureaucracy.

Expertise, Skill: "To know how to" is rare and expensive. MDE as an agency can mount considerable technical expertise in budgeting, school administration and evaluation, plus basic curriculum and instruction skills.

Information: "To know about" is different from expertise. MDE exists in great part to collect information about how state and federal dollars are spent.

Equipment: Beyond basic office supplies, MDE has access to adequate computer facilities apart from the common state government network. Other needs would be contracted out.

Physical Space: However disparate, MDE did not lack for room in any crucial way. Conferences were typically held in commercial centres - hotels and motels - so little state capital was tied up in that regard.

Customer, Clients: Clientele existed at several levels. Ultimately, students at all levels are MDE clients. In some cases the parents of these students were vocal clientele. More typically, the professional educators were the immediate clientele of MDE, and were the most demanding.

Time: MDE, in theory, has time to devote to gathering information, developing new ideas, and mounting programmes. In fact, staff regularly lament the shortage of time to go beyond minimal tasks.

Policy Commitments: A favourable policy from the state or federal government can give MDE regulatory power or discretionary money. Or, staff and freedom can be "cut to the bone".

Public Support, Good Will, Votes: Public success of visible MDE programmes helps to assure all other resources. Alternately, the state government is less than sympathetic to a politically unpopular agency. MDE success in this realm varied by issue.

Table 3: Resources Available to MDE

This describes - though probably does not exhaust - the range of energic inputs usable by MDE. In order to survive or to accomplish objectives in pursuit of goals, MDE must assure a continued supply of these inputs. Resources can be consumed, certainly, but ideally will be inputs toward the production of some saleable output - the classical view of the open system. The output, in turn, should ideally be usable in MDE interchanges with its environment. A description of the environment of MDE follows.

The Environment

The environment of MDE is viewed as a complex turbulent field (Emery and Trist, 1965). In such cases, not only are elements of the environment constantly changing, but the relationship between these is in flux. The environment of MDE is predictably composed mostly of organizations (Perrow, 1972), though the 1963 Constitution can also be viewed as an environmental constraint.

The first element, the 1963 Constitution, reduced the maximum number of major state departments to twenty. The existing Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction was amalgamated with several others, adding to the traditional K - 12 functions the following: State Library, Vocational Rehabilitation, Student Financial Assistance, schools for the deaf and the blind, Higher Ed. Facilities Authority, Higher Ed. Assistance Authority, Community Colleges, Adult Continuing Education, and the "planning and coordinating" of higher education. This is the cause of the diversity in structure, clientele, and geography. MDE does not have legal authority to mandate curricula; the legislature does, but bows to the "tradition of local control" which is alive and well in Michigan education. MDE control over higher education is tenuous, as will be shown later. Regarding finance, the MDE role is one of advising the Legislature. Thus constitutional restrictions guide our attention to a second environmental element, the state government.

Ultimate responsibility for education in the U.S. lies with the states; even the longstanding tradition of local control in Michigan is legally retrievable by the state. Michigan shares the assumption that education should be removed from partisan politics, hence the separately elected State Board. But the Governor, as chief executive, heads all agencies, including MDE, and fills vacancies on the State Board via Gubernatorial appointment. He is also a member ex officio of that body. Further, the present incumbent, liberal

Republican William Milliken, has repeatedly advocated that the State Board should be wholly appointed by the Governor.

Both houses of the Legislature were dominated by Democrats at the time of the study. A major study described the Michigan Legislature as both well informed and busy. (E. Hines, ed. 1974). There is much staff support, and both parties maintain independent research units. The complex committee system facilitates both generation and obstruction of legislation. The Legislature must pass both agency budgets and the state aid to education bills. While local control of curriculum is honoured, everything else including the colour of school bus fenders is subject to the State's authority.

The politically sensitive Legislature is often in conflict with the intendedly rational MDE, as will be shown in several cases. Such conflict is not necessarily unproductive.

Large federal financial input into education has been a fact since the Smith-Hughes Act of 1917. The focus here is on the impact of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, (ESEA). This is aid for several categories of disadvantaged, though large cities absorb the lion's share. Of the over 200 million federal dollars administered by MDE in fiscal 1975, nearly half come through ESEA.* Some federal money is merely redistributed or spent by MDE according to inflexible legislation. In other cases MDE may add state requirements to federal ones. In rare cases, very large discretion accompanies federal dollars, as is true with ESEA Title V. Since 64% of MDE staff were, at the time of the study, federally funded,** MDE is sometimes described as a de facto federal agency. This is a true but incomplete statement.

There are two federal roles as seen in this study. First, the federal government and its agencies (especially the U.S. Office of Education) constitute

* MDE Fact Sheet, February, 1975
** MDE budget office, April 6, 1975

a major environmental element, a source of uncertainty and/or resources. Second, though, these resources are often usable by MDE to reduce uncertainty from the other parts of its environment.

The educational interest groups of Michigan are active and potentially powerful, though several authors (Masters 1964, Usdan 1968, and Campbell and Mazzone, 1974) have noted their intergroup conflict. Iannaccone (1968) described the Michigan interest groups as divided, competitive, and unable to present a united front to the legislature. It will become apparent that this was not always so in 1975.

The largest interest group is the Michigan Education Association (MEA) which represents 80,000 Michigan teachers. Its competitor is the Michigan Federation of Teachers, (MFT), the state's second union, which represents Detroit teachers and some other urban areas. These two compete for memebrs, but often agree on other issues. There are also active but less powerful organisations of school administrators, elementary principals, secondary principals, among others. Detroit itself - its school administrators and supporters - constitute a powerful lobby. The counterweight to Detroit is the Middle Cities Education Association (MCEA), a consortium of 13 cities whose total size and demography roughly match that of Detroit. Together MCEA and Detroit account for 500,000 students - about 30% of all in the state, and they often act in coalition. Last, the Universities are very powerful lobbying forces.

"Non-education" lobbies include the school boards (MASB), the PTA, the League of Women Voters, and the Michigan Association for Retarded Citizens (MARC). At times, the larger unions and representatives of industry involve themselves, but this is rare.

Certainly these interest groups are active and powerful, but their power depends (in theory) on ability to arouse their constituents. Yet the voters of Michigan are more than the additive sum of state interest groups.

Recently, voters have disapproved a graduated income tax and full state funding of education. However diffuse, the voters of Michigan can and do act on education (and on MDE) directly. This potential is attended to by policy-makers, as we shall see.

In review, there are five sets of environmental elements which have influence on the policy-making ability of MDE. These include the 1963 Constitution itself, the state government, the federal government, the interest groups, and the general public as voters. Now, a review of the strategies which join MDE to its environment is necessary.

Strategies Used by MDE

The typology of available strategies was described earlier. Examples of each of the six types as applied to MDE will now be given.

Passive, Post Facto (I): Uncertainty exists, impinges on the system and is recognized; yet no overt action is taken. For example, MDE instituted a state-wide assessment programme in the early 1970's. One author who criticized the programme in a national journal is simply ignored, "no one reads that stuff but a bunch of professors anyway!"* So MDE "sat tight", and in fact received no major stress from the field.

Passive, Anticipatory (II): In this type of strategy, the non-response is planned, the uncertainty is anticipated. In the same assessment programme, the Legislature forced MDE to break a public promise not to reveal results by district. Up to that point no one could identify which districts were scoring well or badly. MDE knew that schoolmen would be harshly critical, but had to elect to absorb that criticism. They lost more public support - but that was less dangerous than defying the legislature.

* Murphy and Cohen, 1974. MDE staff, however, agreed that both Murphy and the article were insightful and accurate.

Reactive, Post Facto (III): Here, the systems response to sudden uncertainty is to change internal structure or behaviour. The same assessment programme was attacked by the Michigan Education Associations (MEA) "select committee" (House et al, 1974). The power of the MEA and the stature of the committee apparently caused MDE to feel threatened and a reaction ensured. First, MDE staff published a response to the MEA's team. Second, MDE responded to a similar attack in Phi Delta Kappan. (Kearney et al, 1974) It seems that overt conflict for public support was deemed necessary.

Reactive, Anticipatory (IV): Here, a system modifies its structure or behaviour before a source of uncertainty has impacted. In early 1975 MDE was authorized to add a large amount of computer capacity, anticipating future need for this equipment and skill. There was concurrent but independent interest by a separate MDE programme area in establishing a computer-based information storage-and-retrieval system. By early fall, some of the new MDE capacity was promised to the information system project.

Proactive, Post Facto (V): In response to environmental uncertainty, the system acts out on its environment. In trying to establish a network of professional development centres (PDC) , the MDE announced its unilateral intent to universities and interest groups. Reaction was nearly violent! Rather than enter into conflict, MDE joined the rest in preparing a joint proposal for the Legislature. So by coalition, MDE stood to gain some shared control over both money and authority.*

Proactive, Anticipatory (VI): In anticipation of uncertainty, the system acts upon its environment. There are many cases in which MDE acts to communicate with and gather information about other agencies in the environment. For example, members of the State Board plus senior MDE staff planned to meet for a day with the leadership of each major interest group over the period of about

* Later events, recounted in "Case Studies" made this a very temporary settlement.

a year. Thus the act of gathering information reduces uncertainty about a variety of environmental elements in advance.

These demonstrate that MDE has in fact used strategies as postulated above, and has at different times used every one of the six types. With this final justification of the applicability of the theoretical framework, let us proceed to examine the case studies. One digression, however, is necessary.

ACCOUNTABILITY

The commitment of MDE to a rational planning model called "The Accountability Model" pervades all issues. Influences seem to have been perceived taxpayer pressure of the late sixties, federal programmes requiring evaluation and reporting, and the general popularity of (closed) systems management models in that period. (See Churchman, 1968; Montello and Wimberley, 1975) The six steps follow.

1. Goal Setting: MDE has developed 24 common goals of education as guidelines.
2. Developing Objectives: MDE has created or acquired student performance objectives for most subjects at elementary levels.
3. Needs Assessment: MDE tests Math and English on an every-pupil, statewide basis, for example.
4. Analyse Delivery Systems: Are these appropriate to the objectives and to identified need?
5. Evaluation: After the programme or course, what progress was made?
6. Recommendations for Improvement: This completes the cycle, and assumes either modification or dissemination.

This is simply a method of operating, and MDE has consistently advocated its adaption by school districts. Initial opposition was vehement. Now, nearly ten years later, very limited acceptance has occurred. Bleecher (1975) suggested that impact on schools was minimal. Still, MDE has continued the advocacy of this modus operandi, and attempts to encourage or inflict its acceptance where possible. The reputation of MDE itself is now very tied up with this model, and internal commitment is high. The pervasive nature of the concept will be shown throughout.

THE CASE STUDIES

Eight case studies are included here. In each, interactions between MDE and major elements of its environment are described. Strategies and resources are identified. The impact of these strategies on the policy-making ability of the agency will be described in each case.

Higher Education

The question here is, "Who has legal authority to control Michigan's universities?" What authority exists is embedded in the 1963 Constitution, and efforts to extract it have been made by MDE, the Legislature, and the Universities themselves. MDE has been the least successful seeker, to the date of this study.

The 1963 Constitution created MDE in its present conglomerate form by adding some higher education tasks and responsibilities to MDE's K-12 predecessor.* According to section 3 of article 8 of that document,

> It (the State Board) shall serve as the general planning and coordinating body for all public education, including higher education and shall advise the Legislature as to the financial requirements in connection herewith. (emphasis added).

This forms the base of the MDE argument for their proposed "planning and coordinating" role. But an earlier part of that same section of the Constitution reads

> Leadership and general supervision over all public education, including adult education and instructional programmes in state institutions, except as to institutions of higher education granting baccalaureate degrees is vested in a state board of education. (emphasis added)

A further entry pursues the issue.

> The power of the boards of institutions of higher education provided in this constitution to supervise their respective institutions and control and direct the expenditure of the institutions' funds shall not be limited by this section. (emphasis added)

Conflict has arisen on several occasions.

* The prior constitution did allow the central agency control over teacher training programmes in four universities.

Shortly after its formation MDE took a policy position against branch campuses. This meant conflict with University of Michigan (U. of M.) regarding their branch campus in Flint; MDE argued that it should become independent. An MDE staff member who was present describes the conflict:

> They (MDE) ran into Senator _____ from Flint, who insisted that his people wanted the word "U of M" on their diplomas, they didn't care whether it catered to their needs or not. They took on _____, who was at that time vice-chairman of the appropriations committee and _____ at that time had a powerful arm and consequently any time it came up to the Board, they decimated our education unit. Very easily, by just appropriating one position less and one position less and pretty soon we're down to one or two people.

The MDE position may have been reasonable, but the agency did not have the legal power to enforce its policy. The Legislature, by siding with the University, assured an MDE defeat. But that alliance was not to last.

Michigan has 15 public, degree-granting colleges and universities. The three largest, known as the "big three", are the University of Michigan, Wayne State University, and Michigan State University. The Legislature had been attempting, in the early seventies, to regulate them by writing language into the appropriations bills which amounted to Legislative control of internal spending. The "big three" took the Legislature to court on Constitutional grounds. The State Board voluntarily entered the suit as a co-defendent, saying the issue applied to their authority too. The Ingham County Circuit Court and later the Court of Appeals, division 2, upheld the "big three". The Legislature conceded and withdrew, but MDE appealed to the Supreme Court of Michigan. Throughout the time of this study there was no decision, so MDE remained in a state of uncertainty.

Thus the Legislature is prohibited from programme review and approval. But the Legislature still retains the ability to fund or not fund new programmes, and so has managed to exercise the control it sought in this de facto, all-or-none manner. A State Board member said

> The Legislature has gotten around the autonomy issue by only funding programmes it approves and supports, so you really can't separate the two, if you can't control degrees, then you can control the dollars...

> the Legislature funds by programmes so "You can offer any programme you want but we're not going to pay for it, unless it happens to be one we're interested in supporting." Our point is that coordination is occurring at the state level but it's occurring at the appropriations committee, where the guy that gets supported happens to be the guy who has the most votes, not necessarily on educational issues.

The MDE position, of course, was that such decisions can be made in a more rational (i.e., bureaucratic, quantified, vs. political) manner.

MDE was able to play a role here by supplying the Legislature with infora-tion. For example, three universities want to establish a new law school, Western Michigan U., Michigan State, and Grand Valley State College. MDE has provided the legislature with studies regarding supply and demand of lawyers. According to an MDE report, there is a demand for legal education by those aspiring to be lawyers, but no demonstrable need for them. Certainly there was no need for three law schools. So the Legislature could avoid choosing one by quoting the rational, politically neutral MDE study. Similarly, MDE opposed a new dental school for Michigan State University and an optometry school for a small college. In both cases MDE said there was no need, and initially the Legislature agreed. MDE thus found a way to be allied with the Legislature and to have very limited policy influence. Limited, because MDE is (a) advisory and thus subservient to the Legislature, and (b) still less politically powerful than members of its environment. Is this the intent of the 1963 Constitution?

One MDE higher education staff member said

> ...People over there (Legislature) have told us, 'It's not so much whether you guys have authority, it's the quality of your analysis and if you do a good job of analyzing requests, then you'll be listened to and if you do a crummy job of analyzing even with all the authority in the world, people won't listen to you - that's all there is to it.'

MDE chooses low-risk, high visibility issues, "but not Ph.D.'s in Science". Staff report that they seek to establish "credibility with the Legislature" in what they do, and that "they fund us to do those kinds of reviews". Since the MDE Higher Education Unit has grown in state funded positions since 1972, the strategy of exchanging information for positions seems to be working.

But other opinion from across the street is that "they (MDE) ought to get out of the business over there".

> You should talk to former Senator _____ , he said it all when he said that, "The appropriations committee plans and coordinates". You see, the appropriations committee, in writing the bill, do the planning and coordinating, and they are not ready to transfer that to some place in the Department of Education to make those kinds of decisions. And I think politically there's a lot of truth to that.
>
> And obviously the universities say "We'll do our own. We don't want any outside interference". So you have in essence competition from three sources, one is the universities who want autonomy, "Leave us alone!"; the Legislature saying that "We spend the bucks, therefore we're the ones who call the tune"; and the Department people saying "Nobody listens to me!"

When what MDE says matches Legislature preference, they are heard. On the strength of this exchange, MDE will survive, but there is little reason to expect a larger MDE presence in higher education in future.

Thus MDE has retreated. First MDE attempted to control University of Michigan and failed. Second, MDE sought legal authority from the Constitution via an alliance with the Legislature, but this stood unresolved at the time of the study. Finally, MDE accepted a subservient advisee role toward the Legislature. MDE has moved from a strategy of conflict (type VI) with U. of M., through a post facto condition in court (type V) to a change in its own role, now a post facto advisor and information gatherer (type III). However rational, MDE lacks either constitutional authority or political clout, and is thus almost excluded from the process of making policy. MDE ability to influence policy is restricted to those strategies available to a comparatively weak, advisory bureaucratic agency in a dominant, complex environment. They have accepted the advisory role described in the 1963 Constitution.

* On October 28, 1975, Regents of the University of Michigan v State of Michigan, the Supreme Court of Michigan upheld the universities, while reaffirming the legitimate advisory role of MDE.

Special Education

Two events are germane. First, the Manditory Special Education Act of 1971, Act 198, was passed by the Legislature. Second, implementation of the provisions of 198 for institutionalized persons was enforced. Both of these events at first glance seem to have strengthened MDE. It is argued here that both events resulted from forces beyond the control of MDE, that they were inevitable. This implies that MDE leaders did not in fact rationally choose the present policy to which they are committed; there was little true choice. However, an MDE subsystem, the special education unit, was influential throughout.

The 1963 Constitution was clear in its generalized support of special education.

> Section 8: Institutions, programmes and services for the care, treatment, education or rehabilitation of these inhabitants who are physically, mentally or otherwise seriously impaired shall always be fostered and supported.

Prior to 1971 this had the support of legislation and MDE rules and regulations. Nevertheless, it was felt by some parents and professionals that the needs of many students were not being met. The proposed solution to that neglect was made very clear in the 1971 state plan developed by the Michigan Department of Education with input from a representative advisory council.

1. The delivery of Special Education Progrmames and Services must be made mandatory under Michigan statutes.
2. The accountability for the delivery of special education programmes and services must be explicitly stated and enforced.*

Parent groups, of which the Michigan Association for Retarded Citizens (MARC) was the strongest politically, professional lobbies such as the special education directors from the school districts, and MDE special education staff

* Michigan Department of Education State Plan for the Delivery of Special Education Programmes and Services, (Lansing: MDE, February, 1971), p. 3. If standard practice was followed, this document was probably written by Special Education staff of MDE for State Board approval.

all apparently supported the idea of stronger legislation.

> There are very powerful interest groups. You don't find anyone more militant than a parent who has a special ed kid and feels that the kid's being shortchanged. These people have a number of organizations. The special ed professionals themselves are kind of an unbelievable group. They're militant as hell and they wrap themselves in these handicapped kids and march everywhere; that's where the push comes from. The special ed people are so militant, so successful that their own superintendents in that town will wash their hands of them - really, there's no control of, or very little, direction. If you talk to superintendents about special ed; "Go see my special ed teacher."

Respondents in this study agreed that MDE special education staff supported the parent and professional lobbies. Central MDE staff complained of the special ed people "It's hard to tell which side they're on." "They don't understand that they work for the state government." Another said

> Some of our own people quite frankly, in my opinion in in other peoples' opinion, instead of representing us and representing the state, hell, they're just right up there throwing the shoes at us. It's true that's their constituency. . . wondering who in the hell they work for! They know who the paycheck comes from, but that's not the same people they work for!

Another complained that, in 198, the Legislature "was aided and abetted by" the former MDE director of special education.

Concurrently, a California court decision "held that education was a constitutional right and that a handicapped kid was being denied equal protection." A legislator said that, in that light, "We didn't want to wait until a court suit forced us." On the other hand, "Mandatory had been introduced into the Legislature for six years previous to that, (197[illegible]) and had never gotten out of committee." The thrust was provided by parent lobbies. The MARC was prepared to launch a petition drive by which the mandatory issue would appear as a proposal in the next election ballot. A member of the MDE Special Education staff described the confrontation with the Legislature.

> First of all you have to remember that MARC was one of the major forces in getting the mandatory special education act passed. Our act was brought about by the fact that they used the initiative petition, as a lever to get the legislature to pass it and they said, "If you're not going to pass it, we're going to!" and they actually had the petitions drawn up and circulated and that's what got the thing moving.

So the Legislature, apparently with some reluctance, passed the Mandatory Act in 1971.

The intent and main points are summarized in the following memorandum from Superintendent John W. Porter. (Porter, 1974)

> The Mandatory Special Education Act (Act 198 of the Public Acts of 1971) became effective in September, 1973. According to the provisions of the act, local school districts, or intermediate school districts if local school districts default, are to provide, not later than September, 1973, all handicapped persons, ages 0 - 25, who have not graduated from high school, special education programmes and services designed to develop their maximum potential, to the extent that an appropriate educational or training programme can be provided.

Thus services were supposedly assured for students in the public schools. The State Aid Bill, however, is the means by which such programmes are funded and MDE bureaucrats have minimal influence there. Nor has MDE managed to build a large enough staff for effective monitoring of 198. Still, the bill did enhance the de jure regulatory power of MDE, and there is no doubt that students did benefit.

The relationship between the MDE Special Education staff and MARC is reminiscent of USDA and the Farm Bureau Federation. That is, the public interest group lobbies for what the agency already wanted to do. And who can tell where ideas originate? For example, one MDE special ed staff member made it clear that he did not lobby "across the street", but

> . . . on the other hand, there are ways of having input into the Legislature through the professional groups or through the parent groups and that kind of thing. The bureaucrat doesn't mean anything to the legislator, the bureaucrat is a means of getting some information. But in terms of persuasion, the bureaucrat is down on the totem pole. He doesn't have any votes. And I keep telling my friends the professionals out in the field, when they ask, "Why doesn't the state department go out and get that money for us?" I keep saying, "Hell, if you want that money, you're the guys that are going to have to go out there, you got the votes. We'll make all the proposals in the world, but if somebody out there in these peoples' constituencies doesn't support 'em, it's not gonna happen"

This is reality for a bureaucratic agency trying to have influence on policy.

A related issue emerged in 1974, concerning the provision of educational

services to persons in state-run institutions. Bill 198 was thought to apply to incarcerated youth, for example, in institutions run by the State Department of Social Services. Persons in residential homes for the mentally retarded run by the Department of Mental Health were also thought to qualify. Yet since the passage of 198 in 1971 little action had been taken to assure that this group of institutionalized persons was receiving services as required. The MARC filed a suit in district court to force the state to enact 198 fully for the 5400 persons affected as defined above. The heads of the three agencies (Health, Social Services, Education) met with the MARC lawyer even before the suit was filed. The suit was "on hold" at the time of this study, and the agencies were striving to meet negotiated implementation deadlines. MDE special ed staff were given the task of ensuring compliance. They were not, however, given extra staff to help.

MDE did not grow significantly as a result of 198. On the other hand their role was altered from a consultative to a regulatory stance. A staff member says their 15 staff are not enough.

> With the advent of Mandatory Special Education, we're getting more into the monitoring and enforcement, planning and these types of things. And the horses that we've got, not only are the numbers inadequate, but the people that we've got, originally, were brought on board when the consulting function was the important thing and we're still bureaucratically organized around the consulting function. We need a major overhaul.

Thus MDE has acquired rather empty authority.

A member of the Governor's staff identified the present de facto authority.

> The controls, if there are any, are in the rules and regulations, but the question is, "Who emforces it?" They (MDE) don't. A large amount of it has gone back; they've asked for the parents to enforce it. . . says to the parents "Well, you go enforce it by taking them to court or complaining." The Department has not been a real regulatory agency in that effect, of enforcing the law.

So MDE has gained some relatively empty authority, and has assumed a more regulatory stance, however ineffectively. The MDE special ed unit was apparently supportive of these policy changes - e.g. the passage of 198 - but was

not the major force in their passage. It was elements of the MDE environment - MARC, the professional lobby, and the Legislature - which determined what policy MDE would inevitably enforce. Because the MDE special ed unit is so closely tied in a "boundary spanning coalition" with the lobbies, it is nearly independent of the "centre of the agency", the MDE executive staff and State Board. This phenomenon parallels the conglomerate nature of MDE as evidenced in its diverse geography, structure, and clientele.

From the view of the special ed subsystem, their actions in both cases might be seen as proactive (V, VI) since they were in at least an implicit coalition with environmental elements, perhaps even at the outset of the move to the 1974 lawsuit. This is a proactive anticipatory act. But the agency as a whole, as a system was not involved in any cohesive way, but rather reacted after the fact to powerful forces in the environment - clearly type III strategies in both cases. Even the ad hoc coalition of the three departments was in response to the impending MARC suit, and so a post facto proactive strategy - a type V response. This does not fit with the image of a dominant, aggressive agency in control of its own destiny.

Chapter 3

Chapter 3 of the State School Aid Act is Michigan's largest state-funded compensatory education programme. It was created by the Legislature in 1970 with at least enthusiasm and possibly initiative from MDE. Similar programmes had existed since 1965, to assist school districts having "under-privileged", "culturally and economically deprived" students. Since the Middle Cities group, a consortium of urban districts, initiated these earlier programmes, the fact that the larger cities tended to benefit is unsurprising.

Chapter 3 provided 22.5 million dollars yearly for low achieving students as measured by the MDE state wide assessment programme. In the autumn of 1974 all fourth grade students were tested. School districts were ranked according to concentration of low achieving students. The money was then distributed at a rate of 200 dollars per pupil to the most impacted district, then the second-neediest, and so on until the money was used. In this way 67 districts were funded, and would potentially receive that same level of funding for three years - with strings attached.

Students were to be post-tested by school districts at the end of the first year. Students who achieved less than 75% of criterion level in reading and math - i.e., one month's growth per month in school - would be allocated proportionately less money for the second year. So districts were punished for failures - and were quick to note that there was no concurrent reward for overachieving. This penalty clause would have given MDE authority to withhold these funds, potentially a great increase in power. If MDE did successfully lobby for the enactment of the penalty clause, such an act would be considered both proactive and anticipatory.

What happened when the State Department tried to cut off funds to the school districts who did poorly? In a word: nothing. Year one was 1971 - 72. Some districts, according to scores, would not be fully refunded. So the Legislature

enacted a forgiveness clause, saying the funding came too late (in late fall) for adequate preparation by districts. MDE itself initiated that action, in response to complaints from districts. The political power of the urban schools was too great to challenge.

Year two was 1972-73, and again some districts would, under the regulations, lose some funding. This time the Legislature enacted 39A, a section which allowed districts to retain previous funding levels if they would modify their "delivery systems".

Year three was 1973 - 74, and the penalty clause was removed altogether, though the 39A requirement regarding changes in delivery system was maintained. How much money did MDE in fact recall? A member of the governor's staff explained:

> Staff member: Oh, they've beat up a few school districts. Not many, but they've beaten up some. One hundred fifty thousand out of 22 1/2 million actually through the threats. They said you have to do something different, and the school districts threw up their hands and said, "We're not going to play your silly game, just don't give us the money." Generally small school districts, but that is control. When you say, "You don't get the money", that is control.
>
> Researcher: When they do that to Detroit, that's control.
>
> Staff: Oh, well. When they <u>don't</u> do that to Detroit, that's politics!

A lobbyist from one of the urban districts was not intimidated by MDE attempts to reduce his district's funding level.

> We'll kill it. We've killed it for two years and we'll do it again. And I have two letters in my pocket to attest to that.

A member of the Middle Cities consortium agreed:

> Porter will never succeed. Every time (he tries to recall the money) he runs up against the lobbyists, he loses.

MDE was thus in conflict with the urban school districts - a conflict which was by definition proactive, but not likely expected, so it must be considered a post facto strategy (V). MDE did not predict that level of opposition.

The MDE position was hard to defend. MDE was advocating removal of as much as several million dollars from students whose need was proved (by MDE!) to be greatest of all. No urban legislators, especially the powerful bloc from

Detroit, would support such actions. Still, if the districts were really prompted to try novel approaches under 39A, the outcome would be defensible. A State Board member said

> . . . local school districts didn't think there would be a penalty. And they were right. Our bluff was called. And we lost the hand. It has had an effect though, when in essence you tell a district that in order to get the funds you have to change your delivery system to one that works a little better, you are shifting some things, you are doing some good.

But in their review of Chapter 3, Murphy and Cohen (1974) visited five Chapter 3 sites and found that changes in delivery systems were at best trivial. A representative of the urban schools agree.

> Now, the legislation allows MDE to withhold or recall money from a 'loser' district if that district refuses to change its delivery system. That's a goddam farce. I have to be frank about it, you know, you could change from one book to another, or change something else, I've yet to have someone tell me, to define for me, what a delivery system is. It's what anyone wants to call it. And I suppose you could shift teachers, you could shift rooms, books, you could do this or do that,. . .

Some districts did return the excess Chapter 3 money because they refused to bother changing programmes - but in such cases the dollar amounts were small.

Two themes emerge. First, powerful lobbies prevented the recall of dollars under the initial provisions of Chapter 3. Second, changes enacted due to 39A have not been major ones. So if a district scores poorly, there is little penalty. But woe to the overachiever!

Battle Creek had a Chapter 3 allocation of $269,000 since 1971. They used it effectively and their students improved. So, in the spring of 1975, Battle Creek scores were too high to qualify for further aid under Chapter 3; their share was now zero. To revise a proverb, "nothing succeeds like mediocrity". Financial success in Chapter 3 requires mediocre outcomes, political clout, and minimally acceptable programme changes. This is an unfortunate and unintended educational "Catch 22".

MDE itself has reaped other benefits. For example, districts must pre- and post-test children using MDE-approved tests, and results are forwarded to

MDE. The consequent ability of MDE to produce data about Chapter 3 has enhanced the agency's credibility, especially beyond the state itself. Murphy and Cohen (1974) refer to three separate statements to Congress by Superintendent Porter in advocacy of Chapter 3 - though the authors are quick to point out the lack of evidence on which to consider the programme successful.

Similarly, Chapter 3 was discussed by MDE officials in their October visit with the Commissioner and staff of the U.S. Office of Education. USOE staff re-emphasized the need for quantitative data to report - in their case - to Congress. Two conversations with staff from the National Institute of Education supported the assertion that governments - both state and federal - seek quantitative proof of success. The reputation of MDE is so great in this area that two members of the federal General Accounting Office attended several MDE presentations in order to learn about Chapter 3 and its methods for evaluating and reporting.

MDE data on Chapter 3 have been collected since the inception of the programme during the 1971 - 72 school year. The most recent piece of evidence was the Cost Effectiveness Study, a summary of which was presented to the State Board on February 25,1975. The report guardedly identified some concomitants of higher reading achievement such as planning time, in-service time, number of hours of instruction and overall expenditure. The report was written and verbally presented to Dr. Porter and the State Board as a beginning, a conservative beginning. There was, for example, no difference - according to the report - between achievement levels in Chapter 3 and its federal counterpart ESEA Title I. Since Chapter 3 provides about half the dollars per pupil, Dr. Porter was quick to conclude that Chapter 3 was more cost effective.

A researcher from one of the political party research groups noted that the results of the Cost Effectiveness study were barely above the chance level, and lent little support to causal inference. Even a member of the MDE staff admitted that the "tighter evaluation design" of Chapter 3 could be influencing

the Chapter 3 - Title I comparison. The fact that many students are simultaneously funded by both programmes clouds the issue further. Any statistic which purports to unravel those comingled sources is suspect, and the authors of the Cost Effectiveness study readily admitted that problem. Dr. Porter was much less conservative.

> We've demonstrated that we can make a difference in the lives of children; we can do a helluva lot better job in improving their performance in the basic skills than we've done in the past, on an aggregate basis. Therefore, I'm not interested in pressing Chapter 3 any more than I am Title I, cause we've made the point. It was a three year experiment to see whether it works and it obviously works. And works better than anything else in the nation. . . And so what I'm now saying to you and to the Chapter 3 staff and the Title I staff and the whole compensatory education unit, is that I'm convinced we can make a difference, in the lives of the kids and therefore we can reject outright the Jencks and all the other fellas that say other kinds of things.

Whatever the accuracy of the assertion, one cannot reasonably criticize the intent.

In review, the first MDE involvement with Chapter 3 seems to have been a proactive and anticipatory strategy (VI); encouraging the Legislature to enact Chapter 3 five years ago. But very soon, conflict arose with urban districts and MDE lost the authority of the penalty clause while retaining the mildly threatening 39A. If one assumes MDE did not anticipate that conflict, that strategy was a type V, proactive but post facto - and unsuccessful. As a consolation, MDE and its staff of one acquire quantitative data, information, and expertise with their half of one per cent ($112,000.00) of Chapter 3. This is a sort of "by the way" enhancing of capacity, a type III situation, but the use of these data to build a national reputation for MDE is a good example of a Type VI advocacy role!

MDE was again shown to be too politically weak to control educational policy, but did manage to build a nationally influential reputation out of the ashes of its political loss.

Professional Development Centres

It is not news to announce that schools have problems. The noisiest recent concerns have been with "the basics", with reading and arithmetic. But what is the cause? Some assure us that environmental deprivation is the culprit, others are equally certain of genetic causes. Others take an empiricist stance, assuming almost all difficulties are subject to remediation. Thus failure to learn is a failure of the instructional delivery system - and the key element of that is the teacher.

In a show of consistency with the assumptions of their own rational Accountability model, MDE focuses on teachers. MDE assumes learning can be improved by "improving" teachers, and that this latter task is possible. So MDE seeks money and power to enact such changes. This brings MDE in touch (or conflict?) with those who presently influence those teachers: the administrators, the board members, the associations and - above all - the colleges of education. This was the relevant environment. The "solution" MDE proposed was the Professional Development Centre, the PDC.

These are three "rational model" assumptions which are crucial to the MDE definition of a professional development centre. One is that teachers are not at present competent. Two is that there is a body of knowledge which can be transmitted to them which will make them competent. Three is that the colleges of education in Michigan have not been transmitting this body of knowledge effectively. These assumptions are verbalized by a wide variety of persons, as the following quotes will demonstrate.

> It's daily and glaringly becoming obvious that we - our teachers - are short on being able to allow our students to become proficient in reading, writing, and communication skills. (Legislative staff)

> But I must say, the job of training teachers isn't being done well enough. Even more importantly, the follow-up after a person is certificated and graduated is simply inexcusably lacking. (State board member)

> And the universities have really been teaching a lot of garbage in education, your administration over there isn't going to say this, but I think John Porter would say that most universities and education programmes are just teaching a lot of garbage. (Legislative staff)

> A lot of people have been "doing their thing in the classroom". I've been on a lot of faculty curriculum committees and I know that the people who exert influence in them aren't necessarily the best people in the department. . . And these people doing their things in the classroom are not really concerning themselves with the performance of the teachers after they leave the college, they aren't looking at the product they are turning out. . . (MDE staff member)

It is apparent that there is agreement in Lansing about the need for better methods of in-service training.* Agreement about the best response was sought throughout the study of this issue.

While MDE has programme control over pre-service teacher education programmes, there is little control over later in-service education or training. Yet MDE does provide about five million dollars annually for in-service training through "seven or eight different service areas", mostly via the federal programmes. An associate superintendent reports that

> . . . we started out five years ago saying they ought to take 30 million dollars out of the state aid act for in-service training and it eventually got whittled down to a million and finally to 150 - 200 thousand dollars. It passed the Legislature, by the way, so the groundwork had been laid with them, and the Governor vetoed it. . . so we went back. . . that's when we started to talk seriously about the notion of a teacher centre or a professional development centre.

In November of 1974, Superintendent Porter called a meeting of heads of institutions and interest groups who would be interested in attempts to create a "Teachercentre" in the Detroit area. The reception to the Porter proposal was reported in metaphor by another participant from MDE.

* The author wishes to state that he has no awareness of whether these allegations are correct or not. To try to make an absolute assessment of "correctness" of such sweeping statements would likely be futile anyway. The point here is that a large number of people seem to share these beliefs, and resources of several organizations are perhaps going to be invested as if all of this were true.

> We drew up a statute for a state-wide network of centres. Now irrespective of the goodness or badness of the statute, it accomplished a purpose by a trick that he (Porter) often uses, and that's to run up the flagpole something like that and have everybody start taking shots at it. And he will usually run it up pretty high on the flagpole, and it'll be a pretty good flag, and they don't just take a shot, they'll get out their cannons and machine guns and everything else and really go after it. In effect, what he did at that point was to take a catalytic role and absorbed a lot of punishment and abuse in the process. . .

But the group held together, and spun off a subcommittee called the Detroit Design Team. MDE paid for a half-time staff associate for the Design Team, a faculty member borrowed from Michigan State University. One of the first changes was the name: the powerful and administration groups wouldn't accept a name like "Teachercentre", so the Professional Development Centre (PDC) label was created. This had an extra advantage of clarity, because the Michigan version of teachercentres bears little resemblance to their British predecessors, who had coined the term in the early sixties. Work was going well on the pilot version for Detroit, and plans for a statewide network of 20 - 60 centres seemed at least possible. The PDC may or may not have a large full time professional staff. It would be free to contract with universities, other professionals, publishers, laymen, state agencies, and any other source of needed services. But while agreement on the concept was emerging, the issue of control suddenly exploded.

> That Detroit effort was proceeding along pretty well and building some coalitions, when Mid Northern State* did an end run into the appropriations committee for a million bucks. Now I find out yesterday that Mid Northern State will get about $950 thousand if the Senate appropriations committee has its way. (MDE staff)

Midnorthern State was financially pressed and had convinced a sympathetic legislator to sponsor a bill giving them money and control to run the PDC. This could have had several effects. First, the MDE would lose any hope of control. Second, a College of Education - the very agency the centre was to replace - would carry out the centre's function. Third, the precedent of college

* pseudonym

control would be set and might spread through the state. If so, all of the others - MDE, teachers, principals, administrators, board members, intermediates - would have lost the chance to have a legally assured voice in deciding what would be taught to in-service teachers in the professional development centres. Response was immediate.

After the MNS end-run, but before the next meeting of the Detroit Design Team, Superintendent Porter presided over a regular meeting at which the ten major K - 12 interest groups were represented by their elected leaders and chief officers. He asked that the group dispense with the planned agenda and discuss a second PDC. That is, he suggested ignoring Detroit and moving to establishment of an "outstate" centre. Another MDE staffer explained.

> . . . the outstate people are now saying to us, "Well, let's get going on something outstate and let Detroit go its merry way, because we don't want Detroit's model"; what they're really afraid of is that we'll do something down there and slap that on everybody else.

During the meeting, one interest group leader supported the idea of moving ahead on the outstate centre. But he was also from Detroit and didn't want to give up on that battle. "This model puts all the control in the hands of the deans of the colleges of education!" That, as stated earlier, was totally contrary to the intent of the interest groups. The leader of another - and very powerful - interest group said, politely but firmly:

> What we object to is Mid-Northern State getting a million dollars to keep on doing what they're doing. I think we ought to get on with killing the Mid-Northern State proposal.

Another voice noted that his "membership is adamant that work begin on the outstate centre." Still another reported that "the position of (his organization) is essentially the same. . .", and so decisions are made. The PDC group would begin work on an outstate centre. But more important, lobbying in favour of the original proposal - and versus Mid-Northern's plan - would begin.

Apparently MDE had learned the value of politicking, of building a coalition to support an initiative. The PDC bill which was in the legislature as of July 1975 allowed MNS to be the fiscal agent for the one million dollars, but required that governance be shared with the Detroit School District, the Wayne County Intermediate School District, the teachers' union, and others. Further, the money would flow through MDE which would potentially retain a veto over the master plan. Certainly this is a more favourable outcome for MDE than in previous state-level cases.

In review, the first strategy was to impose the will of MDE on all others, a proactive and anticipatory strategy, (VI) Whether this was a serious attempt or a ploy, it was doomed because the environmental elements were too powerful to be so easily dominated. So MDE retreated (sic?) after the initial conflict to membership in a coalition - a type V strategy. Even in the face of serious challenge, the coalition held and MDE emerged with both credibility and some power. Also, every coalition is also a communications link, a device for anticipating and informing the next issue. MDE membership in this coalition is a non-trivial outcome.

As before, it is the Legislature which is the ultimate source of authority. New here is the dominant and successful role played by Superintendent Porter. The author has argued that the forces which surround major issues restrict the actions of key actors to a great degree - and that remains true here. But in this issue the leadership of MDE seems to have maximized the limited available gain. Perhaps this reflects increased political ability within MDE.

Interlude

At the state level it seems that the Legislature is the ultimate source of resources and that allocation is primarily a political act. The most successful MDE strategy seems to have been the coalition formed regarding Professional Development Centres. But that was essentially a political success, and MDE had been an advocate of "rational" planning for years. How can it maintain such a posture in its predominantly political environment? It is argued that the federal government, which is the largest source of operating revenue for MDE, is the cause.

Most federal money "flows through" MDE to schools; some remains for agency use. Discretion varies, but it is evident that MDE is able to use some of this federal input to enact strategies on other elements of its environment. The largest federal programme, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) pours about a hundred million dollars into Michigan each year. ESEA itself was passed by a coalition effort, and is thus an amalgam of categoricals rather than general aid. Still, the major emphasis of this "War on Poverty" vintage bill is aid to areas impacted by poverty. This is embodied in the largest part, Title I, and it is Title I which shall command our attention first.

Title I

Recall the major argument: strategies enacted at a system level have influence on the policy-making ability of the agency. Those strategies are often unanticipated, often unavoidable by the rational, goal-seeking leaders of the organization. It will be shown here that Title I helped to cause great changes in the general character and objectives of MDE.

Of the 99 million ESEA dollars sent to Michigan in fiscal 1976, 84 million were under Title I. Title I managed to provide money for 496 of 530 school districts in Michigan in 1972-73, at $347.00 per eligible child. (Porter, 1974) About half of the recipients were from Detroit (MEA, 1974) and the balance were also predominantly urban - typically Democratic constituencies. Rural poor were also served; the suburbs usually were not major beneficiaries.

The most obvious impact of Title I* - and of ESEA in general - was the growth of the agency. The sudden almost "dumping" of millions of dollars was a source of confusion at first, and it was almost all Title I money. One Associate Superintendent described the effects in the early days.

> It really had a tremendous influence on the agency, in terms of size, in terms of posture, in terms of throwing on them a whole new set of roles which they didn't really know how to handle, at least at that point. Nobody had really started to think out what all that meant.

The confusion of that period was attested to by others who were present. (It is interesting that few veterans of that period remain.) But MDE learned how to accommodate. One change was in the recruitment of staff, a process that has become more formal and more intentionally concerned with diversity. The same Associate Superintendent described the transition.

> The other thing. . . was the giving of real attention to who you were were hiring for those positions. Now they began to get a little bit of turnover, not a lot. They began - instead of running out to rural Michigan - they started going and getting blacks and guys or gals that had been working in the large urban areas and with poor kids and with - quote - educationally deprived kids. . .

* Unless otherwise indicated, "Title I" from here on refers to Title I-A, the basic section. Title I "Migrant" is run differently, for example, and will not be examined here.

The change in staffing patterns is important in itself, but also in what it reflects. Title I focused the attention of a previously rurally oriented agency on the cities where most of the Title I funds were spent. Thus the emphasis on diverse staffing and especially the recruitment of minorities, paralleled the changing focus of MDE, changing to take new notice of the cities and their diverse people and problems. (That was long before the affirmative action phenomenon began to have legal impact on agencies receiving federal funds!) Not only was the agency made larger, but its make-up was altered. The rural became often urban, the predominantly white, male agency added at least some blacks and women. All of this was accomplished in the case of Title I by a 1% administrative allowance. If changing the face of MDE had been a goal of ESEA, the money would have been demonstrably well spent. MDE, as it acquired new people and entered new programmes, enhanced its own capacity. It grew; it diversified, and gained much new information, acquired many new skills. This very aggressive embracing of the new role created an agency with much more potential influence than its predecessor.

The changes went well beyond size and demography. It is clear that the role of MDE has changed also. To a large extent, the regulation of federal money has become a primary MDE function. This has required that MDE act differently than pre-1965. For example, MDE must provide more than just money to the school districts. The Director of Title I identified the following major tasks.

> With the money go responsibilities. We have a responsibility to provide technical assistance to local districts, to conduct programmes in accordance with federal regulations and state board policy . . .
>
> There's a matter of working with local districts to develop POs, to get a design that will measure the progress, which means pre-tests, post-tests, there's a matter of assembling all this in a report, there's a matter of identifying successful delivery systems so that they can be disseminated to districts that are in need of them.

These questions of evaluation, measuring and reporting are recurring issues.

These are huge sums of public money and must be accounted for. To Congress and the federal agencies which act for them, solid information that money given was "well spent" is politically very valuable. Representatives and Senators want to get re-elected and proof that they spend public money effectively is likely to be useful. What is the impact of this dual task, of disbursing money and seeking positive evaluations? Staff are now "programme specialists" not consultants as they once were. And they don't give advice or consultation, they give "technical assistance".

> Title I helped to push the Michigan Department of Education into a regulatory role. No matter how you slice, Title I has regulations, and if programmes are not conducted in accordance with the regulations, you're subject to audit exceptions. And therefore the staff, much as they would like to be strictly curriculum people, have to be concerned with regulations.

While the speaker is the Title I director, the complaint was heard in many other places. Yet, while some old-timers bemoaned the loss of collegial relations with the field, others welcomed the chance to have legal authority, to exert power. Title I made it necessary that many people be involved in the latter task. The director continues:

> Secondly, I think that Title I is probably the major programme that has influenced the rise of the Research, Evaluation and Assessment organization.

This refers to Research, Evaluation and Assessment Services, one of the larger service areas within MDE. The size of that subsystem - 36 people, $1,691,400 last year - documents the commitment of the agency to those tasks. There is not likely to be a reversal of that trend, at least so far as Title I is concerned, according to its director.

> I think we're going to be more involved in programme decisions based on the evaluations and I think its going to get down to the building level soon. We may be making programme evaluations at the building level.

Building-level evaluations have already been proposed to the State Board and are under study. If MDE were able to fund by building, the potential for regulation would be enhanced. This would be consistent with the trend of MDE

and Title I toward increasingly more careful measurement of certain measures of achievement.

It is not only Title I programmes which are subject to evaluation. Evaluation has become an institutionalized concern, according to another senior staff member.

> . . . it's also led to the point where now we do a lot of evaluation in compensatory ed., we're going some in general ed., there's a real push on to do it in special ed and there's a push to do more on voc. ed., in other words, that whole notion of finding out who gets what dollars for what and what happened has kind of started to permeate not only this whole agency, but all of education. . .

The emphasis on evaluation seems to have been either initiated or enhanced by ESEA money, especially Title I.* These are large changes in the agency, especially since all MDE gets is a 1% administrative allowance. But that figure underestimates the value of Title I to the agency.

There is a small subsection of Title I which gives MDE a resource as valuable as money: discretion; Title I-B goes only to districts that survive three qualifying cuts. The first is effort and the second is intensity of poverty level. The third appears to be whatever MDE wants to add. Last year, according to the director of Title I,

> . . . we did set some criteria that were approved by the State Board of Education. It was that districts would use this money for management systems for individualizing instruction, e.g., it would be a system that uses performance objectives, that has an individualized approach, has a method of keeping track of students' progress. . .

In summary, the MDE required applicants to adopt its Accountability Model and to do so using a diagnosis-prescription type of system. This subsection was worth $2.8 million in 1973-74 and slightly less in 1974-75. The funds allowed

* ESEA in general and Title I in particular caused similar growth in the US Office, and a similar but appraently less dramatic emphasis on monitoring. Compared to Murphy's description ("Title I of ESEA" Harvard Educational Review, 41:1, February 1971, pp. 35-63) of both the US Office and the state of Masachusetts, the Michigan Agency seems to be more aggressively "rational" than either of the other two.

MDE to run some valuable and expensive experiments and to advocate their Accountability Model, both at federal expense. (They also gained $2.8 million worth of at least temporary allegiance.) Thus MDE in fact manages to control more than the simple 1% administrative allotment. It is interesting and not surprising that the Title I-B money was spent in a way that complemented the directions and themes already established by the major section, Title I-A.

MDE administers Title I according to federal regulations, so the money is focused on urban poor. There is an argument that many students with academic need are being ignored by the present formula. Supposedly, a change to an academic funding base such as that of Chapter 3 would move some dollars to surburban low achievers - traditionally Republican areas. A professional staff member from the U.S. Senate Minority (Republican) Education Committee visited MDE in late 1974 to discuss these two programmes.

There was agreement that Title I should move to an academic funding base. One, it would supposedly serve Republican constituents. Two, it would enhance the control of MDE since their existing statewide assessment unit would likely be augmented. But the visitor from D.C. was not hopeful of any changes which would benefit MDE. "There is a strong anti-state bias among the Democrats" he said, "they just don't trust the states." The Democrats support present legislation which gives most federal money directly to school districts without state strings.

Earlier in the same year, all senior Michigan staff met with their bureaucratic counterparts from the U.S. Office of Education during "Michigan Education Week". Throughout the three days of meetings in Washington one theme recurred: USOE should increase the power of MDE relative to the local districts.

Dr. Porter presented a summary of MDE-federal interaction to the USOE members at the final administrative seminar. Under the heading "What the Office

of Education Can Do for Us to Help Improve Our Programme"* the following ideas appeared.

1. There should be active involvement of department staff in developing new rules for ESEA Title I.

2. There should be greater emphasis on educational disadvantagement rather than socio-economic status for identifying target groups (for Title I). . .

3. Section 731 of PL 93-380 requires. . .evaluation of programmes funded under the act. We. . .support. . .and advise the Commission not to bypass state education agencies in this activity. . . make available to state education agencies funds and appropriate guidelines for conducting the required evaluations.

These points continue the theme. MDE seeks changes in legislation which will enhance their very limited bureaucratic control over local districts.

One of the federal staff at that meeting suggested that Congress was the source of anti-state feeling. It is there the laws which by-pass the state agency originate, he said, because some "don't trust the states as far as they can throw them!" Sounds familiar. In his concluding remarks, Superintendent Porter said, "We need your help to do what you agree with, cause a lot of people are against us." And with that, Michigan Education Week concluded also.

Three general conclusions are warranted. First, the systemic strategy with which MDE greeted ESEA was reactive, and in the case of Title I was post facto. This is a type III response. MDE accepted what came and adapted to the new funds and tasks. This adaptation changed the role of MDE toward "rational planning", regulation, evaluation, quantification - all in service to USOE. It also diversified the MDE staff in a demographic sense, and likely contributed to the raised academic qualifications. Second, MDE, while being changed, was provided with some discretionary money which was purposefully used to reinforce the reacting change (a type IV strategy), and concurrently to influence locals, to "sell" accountability. This latter was a type VI act, and is at least partly

* In his "Title I of ESEA" article, Murphy suggests that neither nor the state agencies have much control over federal Title I funds. Murphy's contention is that the local educators have nearly unrestricted control, and Porter (above) agrees. But acc ording to the picture Murphy paints of the US office, they have little power to share - and thus it is the Congress to which the attention of MDE should be directed.

successful. Third, MDE attempts to influence changes in Title I regulations were also proactive, anticipatory (VI) (lobbying!) strategies, in search of even more discretion.

In these ways, the strategies which intervene between the organizational system and its environment have influenced the policy-related abilities of MDE. First, the "rational model" emphasis and modus operandi of the agency have been assured. Second, available discretion has allowed reinforcement of those directions, and has led to more overt advocacy of the MDE rational model approach to education. Third, MDE was seen to lobby in favour of "more of the same". All of these mutually reinforce a rational, centralist, quantifier's view of education - not the only reasonable policy stance.

Title III

If Title I helped to mound MDE into a more regulatory, rational, numbers-oriented agency, then Title III provided the tools for ever larger commitment. First, Title III provided money, most of which was by law redistributed to schools. MDE was required to regulate and evaluate, as earlier. This undoubtedly had some adaptive effect on the character and methods of MDE, just as Title I did. But second, Title III regulations allowed MDE discretion, authority to influence how that money was spent, a rare chance for MDE to influence local curriculum policy via fiscal control.

Title III was intended to help school districts develop "innovative and exemplary" methods for helping children learn. In fiscal 1976, Michigan's allotment was about six and one half million dollars. While funds were not restricted to the low-income Title I constituency, that group was still the major audience.

Title III was written in unrestrictive language to encourage experimentation, not federal direction. The state agencies had two choices. They could pass the money on virtually untouched in terms of restrictions. Or, they could impose further control at the state level. One Associate Superintendent who was with MDE in the 60's advocated that state controls be added then.

> . . . and I proposed to the Board that it ought to take some strong positions as to what it would fund. It ought to decide where the major weaknesses were, it ought to decide in accordance with an assessment of major problems and weaknesses within our system and it ought to put some money into some experimental and demonstration projects in those areas, in order to beef them up.

In fact, for several years the Title III programme operated in a reactive fashion, funding the best of whatever proposals arrived. This was a "grant" situation - and was soon to look more like a "contract". That is, the responsibility for deciding what should be done was gradually assimilated by MDE. Year by year, the agency added restrictions to both goals and to methods of operation. The director of the Experimental and Demonstration (E and D) Centres Programme - which administers Title III - described how MDE limits the

discretion of school districts.

> Well you see under the federal regulations, we can establish our own priorities. . . each year we do a needs assessment throughout the state, getting the perceived needs of superintendents; one year it might be fine arts, another year it might be math. . . so that we establish our own state priorities for funding and we're allowed to do that for Title III, so that we can in essence cut down the competitive nature of it by limiting the categories of funding.

In this way MDE in fact influences the curriculum policies, the goals of local districts - or at least of those districts who want a share of Title III funds. This control of broad goals however, is not the only MDE influence.

> This year we were talking about delivery systems analysis, we were asking school districts to, in terms of whatever grant they were interested in, reading or math, or social studies, what have you, to analyse for us their procedures for deciding what alternative systems they want; the analytical procedures they went through and how they evaluated that procedure. So we're still getting all kinds of projects. . . but we're asking each one of them to document for us the analytical procedure they used in terms of the six-step model.

This is different in that MDE is regulating the way districts plan and operate programmes. This is potentially a much more powerful intervention than the evaluation requirements of Title I or Chapter 3. It is interesting to note that MDE applied their "standard solution" - rational planning - to a new type of problem. There seems to be an attitude that "Whatever the problem, the Accountability Model can fix it!" The first element of that six-step model (p.24) is the setting of goals, so MDE exerted control over project goals. In a slightly different tactic, MDE requires that districts operate within the framework of the whole model.

> Well. . . we don't look too seriously at applications unless they follow the prescribed six-step accountability model programme. It has introduced the concept of accountability to local school districts.

And, as described above, MDE on one occasion required that all funded districts "analyse delivery systems"; this is another step in the six-step accountability model. Thus MDE advances beyond control of goals, of general areas, such as math vs. moral education vs. environmental studies. MDE is now controlling, to some extent, the means of choosing, planning, and evaluating programmes.

If the medium is truly the message, then the message in Michigan is the quantitative, rational, accountability model.

Two other major thrusts are relevant. First, there is a consortium of school districts called the 6/5 schools (pronounced six-five) which has hired a consortium manager on Title III money. These districts have promised to implement, in part, the six-step accountability model in their own planning operations. The E and D director explained that there was also a secondary impact.

> Then there are eight other school districts that we are funding at a very minimal level, sort of on the periphery of the circle and they're going to observe and contribute what they have done with the packages and the bank of materials and this kind of thing.

These eight other districts are mostly large and influential urban school districts, so this opportunity to influence them is significant. And it was done with Title III money. Thus Title III gave MDE a chance to play its advocate role and a chance to involve some major clients with its model. This may help to reduce uncertainty associated with those school districts, specifically with the reaction of these districts to the Accountability Model. MDE has, with Title III money, bought some minimal allegiance through a federally financed programme of cooptation.

The second thrust is contract research. MDE can use some portions of Title III money to develop specific tools or capacities for which they anticipate need, or for which they have recognized earlier needs. In either case, the strategy is a reactive one, a response made possible by the discretion of Title III.

> We have discretionary monies under our administrative monies that we can contract for special kinds of activities. For example, we contracted for the development of a document called "Accountability, a Management Tool for Teachers;" we're contracting with Bloomfield Hills and Westwood School District to do a comparative study on the implementation of the six-step Accountability Model. That's a contract, it's not a competitive grant, it's a contract between us and those school districts. We've also contracted with Batelle, Incorporated to do a process model for the generating of affective objectives.

In this way Title III influences the policy-related role of MDE by providing

resources ($ and discretion) which MDE uses to pursue their Accountability oriented role. This is the same rational model role which we said was caused in part by the advent of ESEA itself, especially Title I.

The MDE programme area which administers Title III is called the Experimental and Demonstration Centres area. That concept implies that someone - or some agency - has determined that something was worth demonstrating. In this case, MDE has a multistage filtering process. Funded projects typically run for 3 or 4 years if yearly evaluations are favourable. Then an outside person or agency validates those evaluation data. Then, from that pool of validated projects, an MDE classification committee selects those which should become demonstration sites.

> The good data plus the impact for implementation is what we're really looking for. And when we get that validated data, we can nominate some as demonstration sites. Staff nominates them; that doesn't come from the field.

This point is crucial - it is the MDE staff who decide what shall be "demonstrated". And only demonstration-level projects can be eligible for "adapter/adopter grants". This simply means that if a school district likes an idea, it can apply for some Title III funds to implement the idea. But this only applies to ideas which MDE staff have approved.

On this same topic, the Superintendent responded to a challenge from a colleague who had said that the E and D Centres were "the same as the old Resource Centres we had 30 years ago."

Dr. Porter replied that the E and D Centres are to be "new, significantly different. . . in a resource centre you're responsible to what the people out there want to demonstrate. Now, we can demonstrate out of this office what makes a difference."

Like Title I, Title III has enhanced the regulatory quantitative emphasis of MDE. Perhaps the emphasis on measurement and rational planning is a result of federal requirements of that type. Or on the other hand, perhaps MDE uses the

necessary regulating and measuring activities which accompany federal money to retroactively justify its own predisposition in that direction. It is simply too late to sort out the direction of influence. It is, however, possible to describe the results of the union.

The MDE staff do agree that the agency has taken a more regulatory stance. An Associate Superintendent described the general change.

> Any time that you invest in an agency power through control approval, funding approval, any of these things, you enhance the regulatory aspect of it, and the agency gets to thinking along that line. I separate the work "service" from "regulating"; any time you're regulating somebody you're not providing him a service. So I think we have gone from a service agency largely, except for certain laws we had to enforce, to one of control. Money, and the controls that went with it, brought regulatory powers and we just lapped it up. And I think our Department as a whole. . . sees itself as regulatory.

Another Associate Superintendent perceived that Title III had been influential in that change.

> I think Title I caused this agency really, eventually to get serious about the whole question of evaluation, as did Title III. While we don't do an ideal or perfect job yet, I think the evaluation work that's now being done is far superior to where we were not long ago and for a good example of that, read the latest Title III evaluation. . .

In summary, the same adaptation of MDE as shown in Title I continues. This is a reactive, post facto strategy, a Type III accommodation to the influence of this major programme. To get Title III money MDE must perform some regulatory tasks. But, MDE uses Title III to (1) add requirements about goals and procedures, (2) contract for implementarion of the Accountability model, and (3) contract for specific services or capacities. These are aggressive strategies, usually anticipatory and often proactive (VI). If strategies of this type are indeed more powerful ones, then it appears that MDE has made "good" use of the limited discretion and dollars available from ESEA Title III. The ultimate in discretionary money, however, it Title V, the seventh major case study.

Title V

There are two resources available to MDE from the federal government. One is money per se, the other is discretion over its use. In Title I, the sums were large but discretion limited except for I-B. Title III allowed MDE to impose significant policy priorities on over six million dollars. Title V offers the most discretion of all.

The formal statement of purpose of ESEA Title V is given by Meranto (1967).

> Policy: To establish a programme for making grants to stimulate and assist states in strengthening the leadership resources of their state educational agencies and to assist those agencies in the establishment and improvement of programmes to identify and meet the educational needs of the state.

This stimulating and strengthening was an expressed goal of the framers of ESEA, and was said to be the price for support of the state superintendents themselves in 1965. An associate superintendent of MDE described Title V much less formally.

> Plus once again, a million bucks coming in, which the superintendent says, "I'll spend just about any way I want to spend it." It was just about a flat grant - still is - and a helluva lot of people were hired with Title V money. . .

This approximates the situation described by Murphy (1973 and 1974) in two reports of a study of nine state agencies, not including Michigan.

Murphy observed that Title V money was either absorbed by a variety of "more of the same" expenditures, or that it was used reactively for "fire-fighting", for responding to clear and present "crises", no matter how unimportant. This conflicted with the intent of the legislation to strengthen SEAs, especially to enhance their planning capacity. The behaviour of the agencies was one of satisficing - of choosing incremental, opportunistic solutions to visible problems - planning went undone. Both of these observations are validated here, but other uses of Title V were also observed in Michigan.

The following are the MDE allocations of fiscal 1974 Title V money.

Personnel management	7%
Information services	8%
Legislative	26%
Machine data processing	6%
Fiscal management	10%
School management	1%
Research	1%
Other consultative	3%
Teacher certification	8%
Carried over to fiscal 1975	14%
Other general management	16%
	100%

There are four recurring types of expenditures. First, in some cases the simple "more of the same" criticism is justified. Second, there are cases in which funds were spent reactively to ward off crises, as predicted. (It will be argued here that this is sometimes a more praiseworthy allocation than was suggested by Murphy.) Third, some expenditures did enhance the capacity of the agency similar to changes apparently hoped for by the authors of the 1965 legislation. Fourth, there are examples of proactive and anticipatory investments of Title V money, instances where the MDE has been able to be much more aggressive in dealing with its uncertain environment.

There are, first of all, some uses of Title V that, in the absence of some new justification, have to be categorized as "more of the same". In this category are "processing of 507 applications (for employment)", "holding 45 grievance hearings", "processing approximately 4,000 personnel insurance claims", and the processing of "16,000 provisional teacher certificates", and so on. While the categorization is subjective, these do match the type of activity referred to by Murphy and observed by him in other states. These activities do not contribute to planning and proactive behaviours. Congress did not allocate a million dollars a year to MDE to certify teachers. This is

a passive strategy in which "unexpected" money is merely absorbed - often with very little impact. This is a rare type I strategy.

The second category containing the "reactive", "fire-fighting", "crisis by crisis" expenditures is very interesting. The Research, Evaluation and Assessment service area was an early recipient of a large amount of Title V money. The director of that service area recalled that

> As this research division came into operation, some Title V monies were put in by Ira Polley*to get it started. There came a time when other monies became available, and Title V monies were withdrawn and later if the other monies left, Title V monies were put back here; it was used just to plug a hole here. Now I think that Dr. Porter has made a conscious effort in the last year to 18 months to change that. He has said that he would like to see Title V money used increasingly for research and development activities.

In this case, the role of Title V was apparently reactive (Type III) in many cases, but desirably so. If there had not been a contingency fund available, perhaps a programme would have been lost, and with it a large sunk investment in people, expertise, information, and clientele.

In a similar instance, MDE was required to

> run a survey or Accountability last year - we had no choice, it's one of those things. The governor says "Do it!" and where are you going to get the money?

Where indeed? Title V. This is another instance of using Title V as a reactive post facto defense against uncertainty, as "organizational slack" (Cyert and March, 1967) to be mobilized in time of need. In the Professional Development Centre case, MDE used Title V money to provide a staff associate. This is a proactive use of the funds, though it was likely still post facto - it was opportunistic in the most positive sense. Similarly, when MDE was lobbied by La Raza, the powerful state-wide Latino group, Title V money paid for the creation of a staff position in Latino Education. The flexibility of Title V allowed an MDE reaction to avoid conflict. In all of these uses, Title V protected the integrity, the cohesiveness of the organization. This was done by reactive (III) or proactive (V) use of dollars after having identified some

* Dr. Polley was the first Superintendent of MDE.

need - so these are post facto uses.

The third major use of Title V money was to consciously enhance the capacity of MDE. This is an anticipatory reactive strategy, (type IV). Both number and calibre of staff were affected, for example.

> . . . I think that a lot of good came out of that; it gave a guy like Polley (former State Superintendent of Education), for instance, a relative blank cheque to go out and recruit and pull in kinds of people that he never would have been able to pull in under other circumstances.

To increase the variety and level of expertise of the staff of an organization is to increase its capacity to respond to uncertainty in a complex environment.

One more specific fear was that the Legislature would intentionally weaken some part of MDE, especially the State Board's own small support staff. One member explained.

> But you know, there are days when the Legislature is mad at us and at any given moment they can just chop you to shreds; they can allow you $3,000 to operate with - they wouldn't go that far - but even if they short-changed us, let's say at a 75% level, we'd be hurting. See, right now we can juggle accounts. . .(and use Title V to operate).
>
> When the local districts get mad at us and run to the Legislature and say, "Kill the State Board!" there's no easier way of killing anybody than through money. You just shrink their operation and that's it.*

So, according to that State Board of Education staff member,

> The rest of the office around here operates almost exclusively on Title V money, because Porter's insistent that this office be as self sufficient from state funds as possible.

Potentially, this would allow the relatively weak MDE to be more aggressive, to occasionally confront the more powerful Legislature and/or governor.

Other anticipatory uses of Title V included adding computer capacity and fiscal management capacity. While there are not entirely new activities, they do appear to match the "strengthening" intent of the legislation.

*The author is aware of the desirability - from the Legislature's view - of the MDE's scapegoat role. While it is relatively powerless to build policy, the MDE can be blamed for almost anything, and often is. It has been said that the Legislature listens to MDE when it needs an excuse to refuse a request, but that MDE opposition to some politically popular action is rarely considered.

Fourth, there are cases in which MDE use of Title V money has been proactive and anticipatory (type VI). In one instance, MDE used Title V to advocate Accountability. A senior MDE staff member explains.

> We flowed through to local school districts something like $150,000. . . on a competitive basis. . . we developed a request for proposal. . . with staff from all across the agency and people from outside - Frank Bertallay from University of Michigan - and made six awards of about $25,000 - $30,000. Those six districts are developing models for planning and evaluation purposes at the local school district level. They have, as part of their proposal, committed themselves to building a planning and evaluation office within the district. . . initial planning toward that, documentation for their local board to substantiate the need. We funded three different kinds of districts, districts that had no planning and evaluation capability, a couple that did and there was one instance, Marquette County Intermediate. . . most of the local school districts were so small that they could never support independent planning and evaluation activities, so we got those going.

This is consistent with the intended planning orientation of Title V. The MDE here did the same thing as with Title I-B and Title III. That is, federal money was used and given out to locals, but was given with many "strings attached". When the strings are woven together, a lot of districts find themselves thoroughly tied to the MDE Accountability Model.

In review, there are four major MDE uses of Title V. First, there was some evidence of "more of the same" passive absorption of Title V money. (type I). Second, there were several cases of post facto firefighting (types III and V), and these helped to protect the integrity of the agency. Third, there were cases where Title V was used to enhance capacity in advance of need (type IV). Fourth, Title V money was used proactively (type VI) to advocate the Accountability Model.

In general, Title V has strengthened MDE and allowed it to be more flexible, more resilient with regard to its relatively more powerful environment. Thus Title V has provided MDE a resource with which to (1) defend itself, and (2) influence environmental elements. This, surely, constitutes a strengthening of the actual and potential policy-related influence of the agency.

The Eighth Case: Keeping in Touch

These are the strategies of accommodation.

In truth, this is not a single, major programme such as those featured in the first seven case studies. The eighth case is really a collection of many small strategies, some of which have already been described in other contexts. The argument here is that MDE enacts these information gathering strategies to monitor and filter data from its environment. Such acts assure survival, but are not strong enough to assure achievement of goals out in the organization's environment.

Five strategies will be described in this section. The first is the end run which has already been introduced. The second is co-optation through hiring of critics. The third is use of advisory organizations. The fourth is communication involving shared memberships, and the fifth involves inter-agency meetings. They fall into several cells of the typology.

The End Run

"End run" is a football term, referring to a play in which a back runs literally around the end of his and the opposition's lines to the goal. The term has been adopted by politicians to describe a situation in which any person or group by-passes the opposition and runs directly to the source, usually the Legislature or Congress. The behaviour is typically used when formal channels are either very slow or obviously in opposition. Such was the case in several instances in the present study.

Recall that the Special Education unit of MDE was perceived to be in a boundary-spanning coalition with the parent lobby, MARC, and the special ed teachers and directors.* In this case, bill 198, the parent lobby threatened to end-run the Legislature and access the voters directly. Later, a MARC-

* Cyert and March (1967) describe and predict the existence of such coalitions.

initiated suit forced compliance by state agencies regarding incarcerated persons. In both cases, the MDE special ed unit benefited because outcomes required priorities they shared. Any support by that special ed staff would also constitute an end run - past the executive and State Board levels of their own agency.

A Latino member of MDE staff (not mentioned earlier) was alleged by many respondents to have used the political weight of la Raza to intimidate his superiors within MDE. Note that such boundary-spanning coalitions weaken the control exercised by the centre of the agency.

A senior MDE official learned that a bill to provide twenty million dollars in aid for student food services was under consideration. It was late in the fiscal year, too late to spend the money wisely. Support was known to be given by a Southern Michigan food service lobby, and the MDE leader feared his staff were involved. The associate told his internal suspect a lie about the bill "in confidence", and "Within one hour! Within one hour two legislators had calls down here on that very point - from this guy in Southern Michigan!" The bill did not pass, but the alliance is clear.

Early in the research, the MDE Office of School and Community Affairs was accused of being the true source of a complaint which came from a minority group representative regarding a job description. The document had inadvertently shown preference for women over minorities. The School and Community Affairs Office functions as the desegregation office, complaint department and internal advocate for minority interests. It is agreed in the agency that this group's loyalty to NAACP is often greater than to MDE. The very existence of the Office encourages constituents to by-pass the central part of the agency and "end run" to a source of known empathy. Information and ideas probably flow out from the Office in the same manner on occasion. Yet the

Superintendent was not concerned,

> because for Chicanos and Latinos, for blacks, and the rest of the people that have all kinds of problems, that group tends to kind of mollify those issues before they hit me pell mell. . . they perform a very valuable service.

The office serves as a buffer and as a communication link for powerful environmental elements. Each of these is unintended, from the view of the agency leadership, and so must be considered a post facto strategy with both reactive and proactive elements. Each end run involved an external partner to the boundary-spanning coalition, as so these communication links enable MDE to constantly measure and predict some of the behaviours of elements in its environment, (proactive, V). The prices for such data is limited loss of control of subunits by the centre of the agency (reactive, III). This cost is even more clear in cases of cooptive hiring.

Cooptive Hiring

MDE often hires its critics. This is cooptation in the traditional sense. (Selznick, 1949) It is proactive in that it ties MDE to elements of its environment. It is reactive in that it modifies the structure of MDE. In either case such acts, when observed, were in response to threat, so are post facto, not anticipatory. It is believed that some accommodation was necessary in each case, this may have been the least costly strategy - much less risky than conflict.

Even before 198, many special education interests were critical of MDE. One leader emerged.

> There was only one man they all trusted and that was M_____. The Department tried to hire M____ and he kept saying "not unless you meet this condition" and they kept meeting whatever conditions he set...Finally he couldn't do anything else but come and he came in 1970.

So MDE made peace, for the moment, with its critics, but only at the cost

of adding a semi-independent element to its structure. On the other hand, MDE gained a continuous communication link with all special ed interests - reducing uncertainty for a long term.

The School and Community Affairs office was mentioned above. Its head is a highly political black, a former secondary principal from Detroit. He provides a link - both information and influence - with the powerful black administrators, most of whom are from Detroit.

The Michigan Association of School Administrators (MASA) has been a long standing critic of MDE, especially Accountability. When MDE needed a Deputy Superintendent (number two position), a former MASA president was hired and, for two year, provided a path for communication and influence.

La Raza has two such channels. One is the MDE staffer who was alleged to have used La Raza for end runs. The other was the new appointee to the Latino Education spot, courtesy of Title V money and La Raza influence.

When the PDC issue had begun to coalesce and the Detroit Design Team began work, MDE hiring of a staff associate assured a link with the Design Team and with his regular employer, the powerful Michigan State University.

In all cases, the price for reduced conflict was to allow outsiders more internal influence. The by-product was a communications link. Cooptation is a strong but costly strategy for reducing uncertainty. These involve outside organizations and so are proactive. But the price in reduced control is a reactive by-product. There are then, type III and type V components.

Advisory Bodies

The strategies above, end runs and cooptive hirings, have been reactive responses to pressing need, or to uncontrollable acts beyond or within MDE. More premeditated strategies are available, though.

MDE interacts with many advisory groups. Some are ad hoc, some are constitutional, some are legislated. In all cases, membership includes representatives from powerful elements of the MDE environment.

> We have what we call the administrative procedures, I don't know where the name came from, but. . . we refer a lot of items out to these groups until we take final action. We developed all these advisory committees in which the bulk of the advisory committees are really the education (lobbying) groups, you know, each one of them has eight to ten to twelve members. The citizens are minor segments of that. I think they have their input on things like that too. (emphasis added) (SBE staff)

The State Board of Education refers items to these groups as a Legislature uses its own committee system. At one Executive Countil meeting, MDE staff discussed the fact that the system of councils allowed them "to sidestep a very controversial issue", to let it cool. On the other hand, the Superintendent noted, "if we want to do something, it's gonna take a helluva lot longer for us to do something, so it cuts both ways." MDE can choose to ignore the Compensatory Education Advisory Council on any given issue, but to constantly reject that group's advice would be politically indefensible. While it is not possible to describe all of these interactions, the point is easily made. What follows is a list of organizations represented at one meeting of the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education. This is a major, active advisory group. Note that other, more specialized advisory groups are also represented here.

Governor's Office (one person)
Legislature (Two House, Two Senate)
Michigan Association of School Boards (one)
Michigan Association of School Administrators (one)
Michigan Education Association (one)
Michigan Federation of Teachers (one)
Michigan Association of Elementary School Principals (one)
Michigan Association of Intermediate Superintendents (one)
Michigan Teacher Training Institutions
Michigan Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (one)
Vocational Education Advisory Council (one)
Special Education Advisory Council (one)
Compensatory Education Services Advisory Council (one)
General Education Services Advisory Council (one)
Research Evaluation and Assessment Services Advisory Council (one)
School Management Services Advisory Council (one)
Teacher Preparation. . . Council (one)
Citizens-at-large (six)

Whatever is on the agenda, this Council serves as a general communications device. In an environment which is uncertain, all communications, information, measurement and prediction are helpful. In reference to the meeting I attended, the Superintendent noted that if he had business with Senator B___, it would get done then. He mentioned other similar meetings coming up where he would, by chance, be able to talk to the Governor and to the president of Michigan State University, all off the record and without the need to formalize an appointment.

Certainly there has been pressure in the past by interest groups on central agencies to accept input - probably since the first time in history that conflict between the two arose. So MDE (or Legislature) activity in establishing these advisory channels was at least partly post facto. Some exist because of federal requirements, and MDE can not be credited with anticipatory acts in those cases either. Thus, even though the information MDE acquires is useful for anticipating, for reducing uncertainty about future actions about other organizations, the creation of the links was primarily a post facto response to external demands.

These channels acquire information from the environment - so they are in part a proactive tool. Conversely, as the Superintendent said, "It's going to take a helluva lot longer for us to do something, so it cuts both ways." MDE is changed and constrained by these links to its environment, so there is a reactive component too. For these reasons, the communication links are similar to both end runs and cooptive hirings: all are post facto, and all have both reactive (III) and proactive (V) components.

In summary, these bodies provide influence from the environment which can not always be ignored. Concurrently they reduce uncertainty about all represented elements of the environment. The general impact of policy-making is to decrease the likelihood of MDE enacting major change which is disapproved of by the advisory bodies. This may or may not be desirable; it is unquestionally conservative.

Shared Memberships

The advisory groups discussed above are essentially creatures of MDE. There are other cases where MDE interacts with organizations from its environment on more equal terms.

One is the Education Commission of the States (ECS). Most of the 50 states have a membership in this organization. According to the Michigan enabling legislation,

> "It is the purpose of this compact to establish and maintain close cooperating and understanding among executive, legislative, professional educational and lay leadership on a nation-wide basis at the state and local levels."*

Michigan appoints a delegation which includes the Governor (or representative), two legislators and four at-large members. One of the four at-large members must be the head of the state education agency. In Michigan the others include a representative from higher education, one from the Michigan Education Association and one from the Michigan Congress of Parents, Teachers and Students. The MDE federal lobbyist also meets with the group and reports on pending legislation. There are yearly national and frequent state-level meetings.

The Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) has a Washington-based office and is known as a powerful lobbying force on behalf of the state education agencies. The Council attempts to keep all members informed of pending legislation to the point that a teletype service is used by some of the states. The Chiefs are thus "never more than 15 seconds away from Washington".

* Public Act 359, State of Michigan, Approved by the Governor, January 9, 1973

Both of these organizations are potentially coalitions. On a day-to-day and meeting to meeting basis they may generate little more than memoranda and resolutions. But when the need arises support for an issue can be mobilized. And in the meantime, all members have up-to-date information.* These shared memberships provide that information and constitute potential coalitions in and of themselves.

These are viewed as being both proactive and anticipatory - Type VI - strategies. It is worth noting that while these coalitions do exert occasional influence at the federal level, their immediate benefit is their communication link aspect. This is not such a dramatic strategy that it will attract movie-makers, but it is necessary for survival.

Inter-Agency Meetings

MDE does not share ongoing memberships with all elements in its environment. Nor can it count on serendipity to arrange communications. Thus there are many cases in which MDE shares meetings or projects with others. Some are ad hoc, some more formal. some recurring and some unique. The first is a recurring meeting of educational leaders.**

* The meeting of the Education Commission of the States provided an excellent and humourous example of the dual function of these meetings. Superintendent Porter arrived early and immediately entered a private (and intense) conversation with the MEA representative. They pursued their negotiations with such fervor that both were late for lunch more than half an hour later.

** While Superintendent Porter (or his Deputy) presides, these meetings are simply too obviously meetings of equals to allow inclusion with the advisory boards and councils above.

> We spend a lot of time with the local people. . . for example, every three months John Porter has a luncheon which is called an educational leadership luncheon. . . to that one we invite the president and executive secretary of every major educational group in this state. The State Board comes to it. It's an open luncheon, he opens it up and says, "Now what are your views?" and they go around and each one gives his pet gripe or caution or reaction to something. It's a good meeting.

One meeting of this group was observed. In that case, the group solidified around one issue, and the passive communication network galvanized into a powerful coalition. They were successful in the legislative goal which brought them together at that time.

The State Board has committed itself to formal meetings with a variety of powerful groups during 1975. With one exception (the Council), the meetings are with independent organizations from the environment of MDE. For the first half of 1975, the following were scheduled.

> The Council on Elementary and Secondary Education
> Michigan Association of School Boards
> Michigan Association of School Administrators
> Michigan Education Association
> Michigan Federation of Teachers
> Michigan Association of Secondary School Principals
> Michigan Association of Elementary School Principals.

The mutual value of such meetings is attested to by the fact that all invited organizations did respond. This is in addition to an unknown number of breakfast meetings and the other contacts already described between Superintendent Porter and the leaders of these other organizations.

Another group, the Committee of 23, is composed exclusively of superintendents of Intermediate School Districts. They meet regularly with an MDE associate superintendent who carries their views to his colleagues and interprets MDE actions to the Committee.

The Michigan Council of Teachers of Math wrote performance objectives for MDE some years ago, and recently created a book of objectives, test data and prescriptions. These tools fit the Accountability thrust and are supported by MDE.

Similarly, six workshops were held to interpret Accountability and other MDE thrusts to educators. This is an advocacy task - though MDE included planned critiques from respected outsiders.

On two occasions in the Executive Council, references were made to planned cocktail parties for Congressmen and their aides. The expressed intent was to provide information in a general sense about MDE.

When meeting with U.S. Office of Education staff, MDE also invited two long term critics to participate in sessions. Such acts are risky but informative. Federal staff were impressed.

All of these strategies are anticipatory and proactive (Type VI) attempts at communication with elements of the MDE environment. They are weak in that they provide information, not control.

Summary of the "Eighth Case"

By enacting this variety of strategies, MDE is tied to its environment through a complex network of communication and influence. These are weaker strategies than most we've seen to this point. These are strategies which enable a system to know, to anticipate, and to act if needed. In great part, they are defensive in that they help to avoid conflict, or give warning of future need to react. They increase interorganizational communication, and appear to foster interdependence. This may cause conservatism in decision-making among all partners to the link - and that may not be such a bad thing. Last, they reduce uncertainty in the literal sense of the term.

On the other hand, these are, as stated, the strategies of accommodation - not of dominance. This is how an organization survives in a complex environment, but stronger behaviours are needed to achieve goals. If MDE did little else but "keep in touch" in this manner, it would likely survive. But to achieve goals which require control of the environment, stronger

strategies must be successfully implemented. There is a difference between reducing uncertainty about resources and achieving control over resources. The seven earlier cases describe MDE's rather limited ability to do the latter.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Summary of the Cases

The typology was useful for focusing attention on the strategies. It became clear that the meaning of a strategy, and probable success, were dependent on the relative power of the organization (MDE) to its environment. Several strategies had both reactive and proactive components, since many outward-directed strategies result in (or require in advance) changes to the acting system.

State Level Summary

When MDE has attempted to enforce policies which conflict with the wishes of powerful elements of the environment, MDE has failed. This occurred in Higher Education (U. of M.Flint), Chapter 3 (urban school districts) and Professional Development Centres (initial meeting). Successful strategies at the state level were usually those in which MDE recognized the inevitable power of others. This occurred in Higher Education (adopting information producing role), Special Education (enforcing 198 after the fact, defensive coalition with two other state agencies), Chapter 3 (regulation and advocacy of Chapter 3) and the PDC (activating power of coalition). The inferred role of MDE in getting Chapter 3 passed in the first place is a true instance of successful advocacy, however short lived. Generally, observed MDE ability to enact state wide policy was minimal.

Federal Cases Summary

There are two categories of MDE action here. First, MDE reacted to all three ESEA titles discussed here by changing its own character and methods of operating, by adopting a more urban and highly quantified orientation.

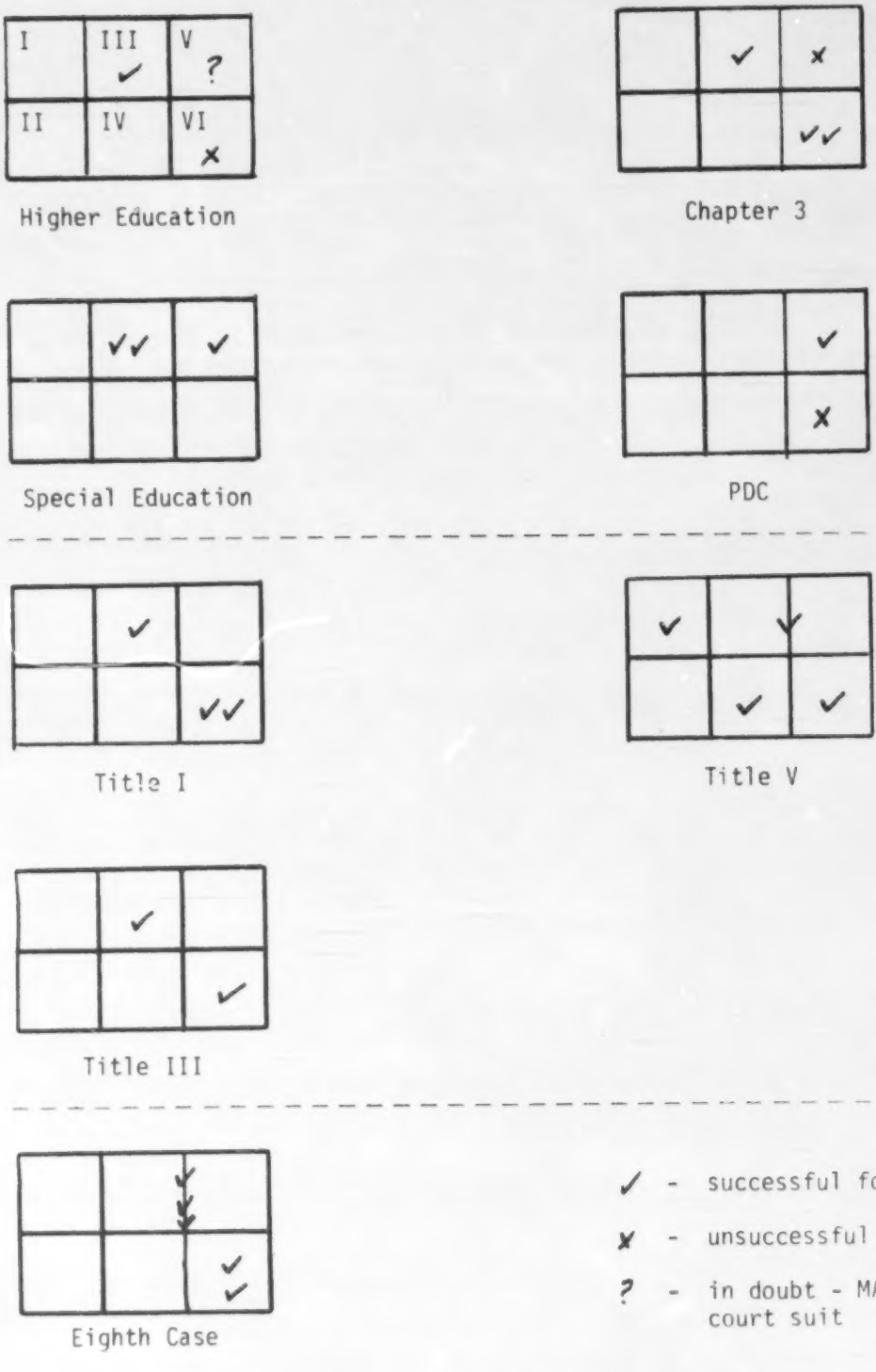

Figure 5: Graphic Summary of Strategy Use by Case

Second, MDE used federal money and discretion to advocate that quantitative, "rational model" view of reality. Only in these latter cases was MDE seen to have influenced schools beyond merely regulating compliance with government requirements. (Others, especially the PDC issue, may in future demonstrate large influence). These influences were spotty, not statewide - but not inconsequential either.

Eighth Case: Keeping in Touch

There was no MDE policy enactment here; these are the strategies of accommodation. These are methods of reducing uncertainty in the literal sense, but there is little direct impact on anyone outside of MDE itself. They are also methods of filtering reality so that the organization may selectively respond to needs which match present organizational competence.

Conclusions

It is the role of the field study to occasionally uncover new knowledge. Uncover, discover, seek out, find, point the way to ... Not "validate". The act of finally determining truth, or at least temporary adequacy of theory, is taken by the quantifiers, the statisticians, the experimenters, and other rigorous partners in the social sciences. The conclusions to this study are advanced with considerable modesty because there is as much intuition as deduction involved in their creation. Concurrently, they are advanced with considerable excitement because the author believes they do describe and explain some important organizational behaviours. This dichotomy is a reasonable and typical condition for a field study.

The State-Level Influences

1. It is assumed that organizations, as energy-using open systems, must act to reduce uncertainty about resource supply.
2. By using the typology to categorize MDE behaviour, MDE was shown to be weak relative to most other elements in its environment. That is, it has little ability to allocate resources of value to other elements of its environment.
3. It is suggested that relatively weaker organizations must spend a greater ration of energy on reducing uncertainty (survival level) since they lack ability to control external resources (goal achievement level).
4. End runs, cooptive hiring, and similar networks are necessary because MDE is weak. MDE must keep informed about political activity in its environment. However, these strategies reinforce that lack of control by reducing the ability of the system to formulate independent decisions.
5. The structural diversity of MDE reflects the diversity of clientele, and subunits are often semi-autonomous. This complements the lack of

cohesion noted in 4, above. MDE thus often responds to its diverse environment in conflicting directions.

6. All of these situations cause MDE to be excluded from significant influence over statewide educational policy.
7. Thus MDE is relegated by default to regulatory, quantitative bureaucratic behaviours.
8. This role appears to have approval of other actors in the state system, so long as MDE is kept at a low enough staff level that it cannot interfere with those major elements of its environment.
9. The relative power of MDE, the diversity of its clientele, and the conglomerate nature of its structure are, for the most part, determined by the 1963 Constitution. This contains the "rules of the game" as approved by the strongest players. The likelihood of MDE enhancing its policy-related ability at the state level is very small.

The Federal Influence

1. Federal flow-through monies require that MDE engage in regulatory, quantitative tasks. MDE assures compliance with evaluation requirements, for example. These are bureaucratic tasks rather than policy-making or service-providing tasks.
2. A second function of the boundary-spanning coalitions, advisory bodies and interagency meetings is to allow MDE to filter out and attend to instances where its rational model is appropriate. MDE redefines, enacts (Weick, 19) its environment in this manner, and does so in a direction consistent with the federally advocated "quantifier" mode of behaviour.
3. Over time, these interactions with federal programmes - especially ESEA - have changed the character of MDE. The larger MDE now contains more diverse staff members, a more urban orientation, and a higher level of academic credentials than its pre-1965 predecessor.
4. Federal programmes add new responsibilities, and new subunits to administer them. This aggravates the conglomerate nature of MDE created by the 1963 Constitution.
5. All ESEA programmes provided some discretion over some dollars to MDE. Title V was least restrictive, and was used in a variety of ways.
6. The cases where MDE was observed to have at least minimal impact (beyond simple compliance) on school districts were cases in which discretionary federal funds were used for "leverage". In all cases the MDE orientation was toward advocacy of its rational planning "Accountability" model.
7. Federal dollars have consistently contributed to the survival and relative strength of the agency. Unsurprisingly, MDE is committed, at an institutional level, to modes of operation which are in harmony with that (federal USDE) source of resources.

Reasons for Dominant Federal Influence in Michigan

1. In 1965, MDE was literally a new organization, and had not built up as many years of tradition as other state agencies.
2. "Systems Management" techniques such as the Accountability scheme and the rational planning orientation of USDE were very "trendy" during the mid-sixties. MDE was "new" enough at this time to change more easily than more entrenched agencies might have been.
3. As shown in earlier studies, democracy in Michigan is alive and raw; conflict is open, public, and involves many participants. Such a political system is less likely to be influenced by an "expert" central bureaucracy than a more centralist, monolithic structure. (See Iannaccone, 1968).
4. MDE's relative weakness compared to elements of its complex environment led to near-exclusion of MDE from significant influence on the state's educational policies.
5. Given the above, the federal government programmes were a very prolific but not very "costly" source of dollars and discretion, when compared to state-level sources.
6. Within limits, larger states receive more federal money per programme. Thus the absolute impact of federal programmes (especially ESEA) should have been larger in Michigan than in smaller states.
7. Within limits, states having a high proportion of urban poor benefited most from ESEA. Populous, industrialized Michigan would thus be more affected than many other states.
8. There was a leadership influence, within limits. The MDE staff who led the agency post-1965 seem to have embraced the regulatory role with enthusiasm. The intensity of this affair with Accountability could not have been predicted from merely systemic or sociological data. The existance of the affair itself, however, (in the glare of hindsight, we admit) seems to have been nearly inevitable.

Equilibrium

1. Federal programmes require rational MDE to treat school districts and personnel as "subjects" to be regulated, led, and controlled.
2. To succeed in the state system, political MDE must treat school districts and interest groups as "fellow advocates", going in coalition to the Legislature.
3. Too much attention to either mode of organizational behaviour would be dysfunctional to the other one. Thus MDE operates in a situation of dynamic equilibrium.
4. MDE can survive in such a situation, but is unlikely to have large influence in either of these conflicting spheres.
5. For this reason, even though the federal modus operandi seems seems to dominate at present, it will not totally displace the more political activity which has been successful in the past at the state level.
6. In this case study of MDE it appears that the range of potentially useful strategies depends on the range of environmental elements. Different strategies are effective with different sources, and there is no a priori requirement that these be totally in harmony.
7. More complex environments are harder to control, especially when the organization in question is relatively weak. Or, one can view the conflict in the words of one very perceptive staff member from MDE.

> I think one of the biggest mistakes I ever made was to assume that one of our roles was to take the Legislature from its decision-making mode - which is essentially a give and take, seat-of-the-pants, compromise, pull this chit in, that chit out - and make them strictly rational decision-makers. That's never going to happen.

In more formal terms, the ability of the Michigan Department of Education to influence educational policy is, to a great extent, limited by the actions of elements in the environment, by strategies which are enacted on those elements, and by consequent structural or behavioural changes in the organization itself.

Post Script

The typology is clearly incomplete in several respects. For example, it does not discriminate between weak and strong strategies. But, such evaluations depend in turn on the relative power of the environment. This requires another typology of environmental complexity such as that of Emery and Trist (1965). It requires that the present typology be modified to include a dimension of absolute "weakness-strongness" of strategies, if that is conceptually possible. Last, it requires the generation of propositions to suggest "under what conditions" certain strategies will be effective. That is, will strategy X enacted by organization Y successfully reduce uncertainty about resources from element 2 in the environment? At what cost? Such a body of theory would have both descriptive and prescriptive utility.

So, even though the typology is inadequate as it stands, two benefits have resulted from its use. One, it focused attention on an important aspect of organizational behaviour, and led to the generation of potentially useful descriptive and explanatory writing. Two, that outcome itself demonstrates that the strategies concept is worth pursuing, as suggested above.

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